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THE
CHRISTIAN REFORMER;
OR,
NEW EVANGELICAL MISCELLANY.

BY THE
EDITOR OF THE MONTHLY REPOSITORY
OF THEOLOGY AND GENERAL LITERATURE.

The Times of REFORMATION.

Ep. to Heb.

Peradventure the dregs of the Church of Rome are not yet sufficiently washed from the hearts of many men.

The ever-memorable Mr. John Hales.

we have a Calvinistic Creed, a Popish Liturgy, and an Arminian Clergy.

Lord Chatham.

JANUARY TO DECEMBER INCLUSIVE,
1826.

VOL. XII.

HACKNEY:

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PATERNOSTER ROW.

1826.

THE
CHRISTIAN HEBREW

NEW EVANGELICAL MISCELLANY

BY THE
EDITOR OF THE NEW-HEBREW REVIEW
OF THE LONDON AND WESTMINSTER

The Times of London
Penny Review of the Times of London
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THE
Christian Reformer.

No. CXXXIII.] JANUARY, 1826. [Vol. XII.

Celebration of the Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in America.

SIR,

December 31, 1825.

THE two annexed papers may, by your permission, find a place very suitably in the *Reformer*, as you have inserted (p. 85.) that interesting description of the Celebration of the Landing of the Fathers of New England, with which they are immediately connected.

The first paper contains the historical part of an article prefixed, in the *Oriental Herald* (VI. 81), to the same account of the *Celebration* as you have preserved. The verses are transcribed from the *New Monthly Magazine* for the last month (XIV. 402).

R. L. C.

The earliest attempt of the English to settle on any part of the now United States was in 1585. No attempt, however, succeeded till 1607, when James Town, on James River, in Virginia, became the first permanent settlement. There, too, in 1620, by the purchase of twenty Negroes from a Dutch ship, commenced the nefarious assumption of property in MAN, still the *opprobrium* of Republican America, too many of whose citizens were justly described by that consistent advocate of freedom, Thomas Day, as signing a declaration of independence with one hand, and with the other brandishing a whip over their affrighted slaves.

This first English settlement, whose results were comparatively unimportant, appears to have originated chiefly, if not entirely, from the motive which has generally produced emigration, a desire natural to man, to improve his worldly condition. The next settlers, who became the Fathers of New England, professed, nor is there any reason to question their sincerity, to be actuated by considerations of superior moment. Governor Hutchinson, indeed, in his *History of Massachusetts*, (1765, I. 3,) doubts "whether Britain would have had any colonies in America if religion had not been the grand inducement,"

VOL. XII.

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Bishop Hurd (Vol. I. Serm. 13) relates, with evident approbation, how the *royal* reformation of the Church of England "advanced under the eye of the magistracy by slow degrees;" nor does it appear to have offended the Protestant *Lord Spiritual*, that "it was, more than checked and kept back by him." There were, however, a small, though an increasing number, who, believing they had got "into a direct way from *Babylon* toward the city of God, held on in a good round trot, through thick and thin," as Dr. Henry More (Div. Dial. v. 25) said of Luther. Thus eagerly pursuing the road of reformation, they quickly outstripped the deliberate pace of the magistracy, and left both "*Lords Spiritual and Temporal*" far behind.

Of these uncompromising reformers, called, in derision, *Puritans*, a number, in the north of England, united to form a religious association, which they deemed a "*Christian Church* than that "*by law established.*" One of these churches, a leading member and the principal minister, Mr. Robinson was commemorated in the late celebration. Weary of the injuries they sustained from the hierarchy and the civil power, Mr. Robinson and his Church, in 1607 and 1608, removed, or rather escaped to Holland, an asylum of the persecuted, where, as contrasted with England, was exemplified that great political maxim, so difficult for kings and parliaments to learn, but which a Frenchman (Frederic of Prussia) has well expressed—"Le fauteur est un Tyran qui dépeuple les Provinces. La Tolérance

* See *Reformer*, XI. 86. ED.

† The case of these refugees was thus noticed at the time in the MS. of Governor Bradford, one of the *Fathers*: "1607. The *Church*, Mr. Robinson's *Church*, in the north of England, being extremely harassed; some cast into prison, some beset in their houses, forced to leave their farms and families; they begin to fly to Holland for purity of worship and liberty of conscience."

"1608. This spring, more of Mr. Robinson's Church, through great difficulties from their pursuers, get over to Holland; afterwards, the rest with Mr. Robinson and Mr. Brewster, were of the last, having tarried to help the weakest over before." See "*Chronol. Hist. of N. England*, by Thomas Prince, Boston, N. E., 1736, pp. 23, 24. There is a fine passage on the Embarkation of the Pilgrims from Holland," in "*A Discourse* delivered at Plymouth, Dec. 22, 1820, in Commemoration of the Settlement of New England, by the Hon. D. Webster." See *Repos.* (1822) XVII. 342.

est une tendre Mère qui les rend florissantes." Such is the concluding paragraph of the *Mémoires de Brandebourg*.

After remaining a year at Amsterdam, Mr. Robinson and his Church removed to Leyden, a circumstance which Professor Everett improved into one of the finest sentiments expressed on the *celebration*.*

In 1617 they determined on emigration to America, a design which they began to accomplish in 1620: King James, as whose subjects they were still to be regarded, agreeing "not to tolerate them by his public authority," but only that he "would *connive* at them, and not molest them, provided they carry peaceably." July 21, 1620, a part of this Church (Mr. Robinson, and the remainder proposing to follow) depart from Leyden† for Southampton, there to be joined by some of their brethren who had remained in England. Sept. 6. The joint-company bid a final adieu to their native land in the *May-flower*, a ship of 180 tons; and Nov. 9, at break of day, after long beating the sea, they make the land of Cape Cod. After various attempts to find a spot on the coast for disembarkation, "it was on the 11th of Dec., 1620," says Dr. Holmes, (*Amer. Ann.* I. 170,) that the venerable Fathers of New England first stepped on that Rock which is sacredly preserved in memory of their arrival. A ponderous fragment of it," he adds, "has been removed into the main street of Plymouth. The 22d day of Dec., N. S., corresponding to the 11th, O. S., has been long observed at Plymouth, and several years at Boston, as the anniversary of the landing of the Fathers."

* See *Reformer*, XI. 87. ED.

† "Being accompanied by most of their brethren to *Delph-Haven*, where their ship lay ready, and sundry come from Amsterdam to see them shipped and take their leave; they spent that night in friendly entertaining and Christian converse. And July 22, the wind being fair, they go aboard, their friends attending them. At their parting, Mr. Robinson, falling down on his knees, and they all with him, he, with watery cheeks, commends them with most fervent prayer to God; and then, with mutual embraces and many tears, they take their leave, and with a prosperous gale, come to *Southampton*. There 700l. sterling are laid out, and they carry about 1700 pounds' venture with them." Governor Bradford's MS. *Prince*, p. 70.

The number which landed was 101, too many of them destined to find in the New World little besides a grave.* The same number had embarked from England, but one had died on the passage; and while the *May-flower* was on the coast, a child was born, named *Peregrine*, who witnessed through 84 years—for he lived till 1704—the daily inroads of art and industry on “the wilderness and the solitary place.”

The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in New England.

“ Their dauntless hearts no meteor led
In terror o’er the ocean;
From fortune and from fame they fled
To Heaven and its devotion.”

An American Poet.

The breaking waves dash’d high
On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods, against a stormy sky,
Their giant-branches toss’d;
And the heavy night hung dark
The hills and waters o’er,
When a band of exiles moor’d their bark
On the wild New-England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes,
They, the true-hearted, came;
Not with the roll of the stirring drums,
And the trumpet that sings of fame:

Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear;—
They shook the depths of the desert’s gloom
With their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amidst the storm they sang,
And the stars heard, and the sea;
And the surrounding aisles of the dim woods rang
To the anthem of the free.

* Dr. Holmes says, they lost “half their number within the first three months.” *Amer. Ann.* I. 173.

The ocean-eagle soar'd
From his nest by the white-wave's foam,
And the rocking pines of the forest roar'd
This was their welcome home!

There were men with hoary hair
Amidst that pilgrim band,—
Why had *they* come to wither *there*,
Away from their childhood's land?

There was woman's fearless eye,
Lit by her deep love's truth;
There was manhood's brow serenely high,
And the fiery heart of youth.

What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?
They sought a faith's pure shrine!

Ay, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod!
They have left undimm'd what there they found—
Freedom to worship God.



*An Address to a Redbreast which flew into my Room in the
Month of October.*

Lydiate.

Poor fluttering bird, a needless fear
Disturbs thy crimson breast;
Compose thy wings, and safely here,
This evening, take thy rest.

Thou tremblest still, if I could speak
The language of the grove,
Which thou canst understand, I'd seek
Thy terrors to remove.

I'd tell how truly I detest
The cruelty of those
Who pillage thy secluded nest
And weigh thee down with woes:

Address to a Redbreast.

That here, no foes will do thee wrong,
 No enemies will harm;
 But friends desire to hear thy song,
 And banish thine alarm.

The scatter'd food which I have brought
 For thee, how large a store!
 Is such as thou hast often sought
 About my cottage door.

Now Autumn's with'ring breezes sweep
 The verdure from the plains;
 Behind them wintry tempests creep,
 And famine in their trains.

Then, Redbreast, all thy fears dispel,
 And plume thyself and sing;
 And here, in peace and safety, dwell
 Contentedly till Spring.

And then thou shalt be free as wind,
 Where'er thou wilt to rove;
 And, welcome, here a shelter find,
 When Autumn strips the grove.

Thou wilt not rest; thou dost not know
 What mean the accents heard,
 But think'st they from unkindness flow;
 Mistrustful, timid bird!

Then, trembling songster, go thy way;
 Now thou art free again;
 Though thou would'st not consent to stay,
 Thy visit was not vain.

God teaches us by whom he will;
 And I, by thee, am taught,
 When he inflicts, to suffer ill,
 As his dependents ought.

As on thy bosom, so, on mine,
 Oppressing me, hath hung
 A load of trouble, which, like thine,
 From ignorance hath sprung.

Mr. Matthew Henry's Plain Catechism for Children. 7

And though, in language understood,
Assurances are given,
That seeming evils, for our good,
Are dealt to us from heaven ;

Still instances I call to mind,
And many such there be,
When I have at my lot repined
More foolishly than thee.

For, could'st thou half the kindness I
Intended thee have known,
Thou would'st not, by a wish to fly,
So much distrust have shown

In me—as I, altho' his care
I'm told of every day,
By fears which border on despair,
In Providence display.

J. N.

*Mr. Matthew Henry's Plain Catechism for Children,
abridged.*

SIR,

IN the year 1784 I had the satisfaction of being favoured with the privilege of establishing, in Hanover Square, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, the first Sunday-schools in the four Northern counties. They were soon followed by numerous similar institutions, both in the Established Church and by the various denominations of separatists : and among the working classes of this large town, and especially in the populous colliery-villages which surround it, they have been productive of the most beneficial effects. For the use of our own schools, I drew up an " Abstract of the History of the Bible," which has gone through seven editions, several of them of three thousand copies each ; it may therefore be presumed to have been found useful in many other schools, as well as in many private families. At the same time the following " Plain Catechism" was adopted, for the purpose of leading the children to an acquaintance with the first principles of religious truth and duty.

When the first set of scholars had made themselves fully acquainted with this Catechism, so as to be able to repeat it before the congregation, I gave them, once a fortnight,

after the ordinary morning service, a short, familiar lecture on the several questions and answers in their order. These have since been repeated at different periods (as the children of the school, and also of the congregation, changed); and if you should be of opinion that their appearance in the Christian Reformer will be interesting to its numerous readers, they are very much at your service.

It may not be improper to mention, that the scholars, during several years after the first opening of the schools, consisted very much of young apprentice boys, and of girls nearly ready for going to service: the provisions previously made for the instruction of youth among the labouring classes having been very inadequate to ground them even in common elements of education. But since the establishment of our Lancasterian and Bellian Schools, our Sunday-schools have consisted very much of children who attend these schools throughout the week, and resort to the Sunday-schools for religious instruction and worship. The schools, both for boys and girls, are under the personal superintendence and tuition of the young men and women of the congregation; much, however, of the laborious part is done by that class of young persons who at first formed the bulk of the scholars, but who now are more generally capable of teaching, instead of requiring to be taught. These, as well as the young people of the congregation in general, the Lecturer has endeavoured to keep in view, as well as the children more immediately addressed.

WILLIAM TURNER.

SECTION I.

1. *Ques. What must you do in the days of your youth?*

Ans. I must remember my Creator.

2. *Who is your Creator?*

The great God that made the world.

3. *Who is your Preserver?*

The same God that made me preserves and maintains me, and in him I live and move and have my being.

4. *What are you made and maintained for?*

To glorify God by being and doing good.

5. *What do you believe concerning God?*

I believe that he is every where present; and that he is most wise and powerful, holy, just and good.

6. *What is your duty to God ?*

It is my duty to fear and honour Him, to worship and obey Him, and in all my ways to trust in Him and to please Him.

SECTION II.

7. *Have men always discharged these duties to God ?*

No ; they soon forgot the God that made them, imagined false gods, and became very wicked.

8. *What measures did God take to teach them better ?*

He sent good men from time to time to warn them of their sins, and to give them good rules for their belief and practice.

9. *In what book are these rules contained ?*

In the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, which we call the Bible.

10. *What is the excellence of that book ?*

It contains the word and will of God.

11. *What use will it be of to you ?*

It is able to make me wise unto salvation.

12. *What is the chief design of the Old Testament ?*

To teach us that God is One, all-powerful, wise and good ; that He made and governs the world, and that to Him alone our religious worship is due.

13. *What account does it give of the means employed for preserving the knowledge of the True God ?*

It teaches us that God separated one people from the rest of mankind ; and directed holy men among them to teach them the right knowledge of himself, and the practice of the duties which arise from this knowledge.

14. *What are the religious doctrines of the New Testament ?*

Like the Old Testament, it teaches us that we ought to obey and love God ; it reveals the mercy of God to penitent sinners ; and, besides, it promises eternal life to the penitent, sincere and faithful.

SECTION III.

15. *By whom did God give the promise of eternal life ?*

By his Son Jesus Christ.

16. *In what manner did the Son of God live here on earth ?*

He appeared in a low and mean condition ; but he

10 Mr. Matthew Henry's Plain Catechism for Children.

was holy, harmless, undefiled, and went about doing good.

17. How did he prove that he was sent by God?

He healed the sick with a word's speaking, made the blind to see and the lame to walk, raised the dead, and did many other things which no man could do unless God were with him.

18. What death did he die?

He was put to the cruel death of the cross, by wicked men who would not hearken to him.

19. Did God suffer him to continue under death?

No; God raised him to life on the third day; and he afterwards ascended into heaven.

20. When will he come again?

He will come again in glory at the last day to judge the world.

SECTION IV.

21. What must you do to become one of Christ's disciples?

I must deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and must resolve to live a sober, righteous and godly life in this present world, looking for the blessed hope.

22. What are the blessings which he has promised to his faithful followers?

The pardon of sin, the favour and assistance of God, and eternal life.

23. What are the conditions on which these are promised?

Repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

24. What is it to repent of our sins?

It is to be sorry that we have sinned and offended God, and to do so no more.

25. What is faith in Jesus Christ?

It is to believe that he was sent by God, and to pay the regard due to his sacred character.

26. How must you shew the sincerity of your faith and repentance?

By a careful and diligent obedience to all God's commandments.

27. *What is the first and great commandment ?*

To love God with all my heart.

28. *What is the second, which is like unto it ?*

To love my neighbour as myself; and to shew it by doing as I would be done unto.

SECTION V.

29. *What is the honour which you owe to God's word ?*

I must read and hear it with diligent attention; I must meditate upon it, and frame my life according to it.

30. *What is the honour which you owe to God in His Providence ?*

I must receive all His mercies with thankfulness; and bear all afflictions with patience, and submission to His holy will.

31. *What is the honour which you owe to the Lord's-day.*

I must keep the Sabbath holy to God, by a diligent performance of the religious duties of the day.

32. *How must you honour God in prayer ?*

I must every day by solemn prayer seek the favour of God, and give unto Him the glory due unto His name.

33. *What must you pray for ?*

For mercy to pardon, and grace to help in time of need.

34. *What else must you do in your prayers ?*

I must confess my sins, and give God praise for His goodness to me.

SECTION VI.

35. *What must be your daily care concerning yourself ?*

I must take care that my heart be not lifted up with pride, or disturbed with anger, or any sinful passion.

36. *What must be your care concerning your words ?*

I must never tell a lie; nor mock at or abuse any one; nor speak profane or wicked words.

37. *What is your duty to your parents and governors ?*

I must reverence and obey them in the Lord; I must thankfully receive their instructions, submit to their rebukes, and labour in every thing to be a comfort to them.

38. *What is your duty to the poor ?*

I must pity, help and relieve them, according to my ability.

39. *What is your duty to all men ?*

I must render to all their dues ; I must be honest and just in all my dealings ; I must be respectful to my friends, and forgive my enemies ; and speak evil of no man.

40. *How are you able to perform these duties ?*

By divine assistance, which I must seek for with sincerity and earnestness.

41. *What must you do when you find you come short of your duty ?*

I must renew my repentance, and pray to God for pardon, and be careful to do my duty better for the time to come.

42. *What encouragement have you thus to live in the fear of God ?*

If I do so, I shall certainly be happy, both in this world and that which is to come.

SECTION VII.

43. *What will become of you shortly ?*

I shall shortly die, and return to the earth.

44. *What are we taught to expect after death ?*

We are taught to expect that we shall be restored to life again at the general resurrection.

45. *To what purpose shall the dead be raised up ?*

To have their actions and characters tried at the judgment-seat of Christ, and to have their portion appointed unto them according to the things done in this present life.

46. *What shall be the portion of the wicked and ungodly in another world ?*

The wicked shall be punished with tribulation and anguish, according to the evil deeds which they have done.

47. *What shall be the portion of the godly in another world ?*

They shall be admitted to a state of everlasting rest and joy with God and Jesus Christ.

48. *What life then will you resolve to live in this world ?*

By divine grace I will live a holy, godly life, and will make it my great care and business to serve God, and save my own soul.

*A Meditation after reading Mr. Butcher's Discourses on
Christ's Sermon on the Mount.*

ALL men are born to die, and since I must,
O may the hour be welcome to my soul,
That hour which will consign me to the tomb.
There the great Messenger of grace and truth,
The perfect pattern of a Christian's life,
Has slept before me ; thence triumphant rose,
A pledge to all his faithful followers
Of resurrection to eternal life ;
And (thanks to God for his transcendent love !)
Obtain'd the vict'ry over sin and death.
This is the consummation of true joy
And happiness unspeakable to those
Who keep his holy law, obey his will,
And, with a firm, undeviating step,
Walk the same path which Christ has mark'd and trod,
Conducting to the realms of endless bliss.
And is he raised to this exalted state
To execute his Father's will, as Judge
Of all the earth ? And will he condescend
To take his faithful servants to himself,
That where he is, there also they may be ?
And shall not we, who bear his honour'd name,
With gratitude accept the gracious boon ?
Be this, my soul, thy constant aim ; be this
Thy best ambition and thy wisest care ;
For this consult the Oracles of Truth,
Peruse the sacred pages, let them be
Thy daily meditation and delight ;
And may my heart, my temper, and my life,
Be regulated by the rules they teach,
Obedient to the precepts they enforce,
And modell'd by the bright example set
By him who liv'd and taught to bless mankind,
To train them fit inhabitants of Heav'n,
And to present them at his Father's throne.
But ill accord the maxims of the world
With the requirements of the Christian code :
Nor will th' example of the multitude,
The sanction of high birth, of power or wealth,
Or pride of earthly wisdom, countervail

To weaken or annul the laws of Heaven,
 Not to be broken with impunity.
 For whom has Christ himself pronounced blessed ?
 "The poor in spirit," humble and content,
 Not sons of pride "shall be the heirs of Heaven."
 "The mourners," who forsake the sins they mourn,
 And bow submissive to the chast'ning rod,
 May rest assur'd "they shall be comforted."
 "The meek," who patiently endure a wrong,
 Strangers to base resentment and revenge,
 More prompt to save than take a brother's life,
 They shall enjoy a blest "inheritance."
 "The pure in heart," not the lascivious eye,
 Shall share the privilege of "seeing God."
 "The merciful" and kind to man and beast,
 For acts of kindness shewn, "shall mercy find :"
 While the oppressor and the tyrant crew
 Shall feel the miseries which they inflict.
 The friends of peace, of harmony and love,
 As favourite children of their heavenly Sire,
 Shall be esteemed : but men of violence,
 Who wield the weapons of destructive war,
 Who measure glory by th' extent of crime,
 And, boasting, aggravate their guilt and shame,
 Must change the savage temper of their minds
 Ere they expect a seat in Paradise.
 They who, with steady, persevering faith
 And trust in God, devote their lives and powers
 The cause of Truth and Virtue to promote,
 Will finally receive a rich reward.
 Nor will th' inestimable prize be lost
 To those who "suffer for their Master's sake ;"
 Tho' persecution, loss of friends and goods,
 Tho' poverty, imprisonment and death,
 May be their portion in this passing scene,
 They shall have ample reason to "rejoice,
 For great will be their recompence in Heaven."

Men daily see their fellow-mortals die,
 And none can hope t' escape the shaft of death.
 Let not the gay, the wealthy, or the proud,
 Affect to disbelieve a future state,
 A day of judgment for our actions here,
 And a decree of righteous retribution.
 These will as certainly succeed this life

As it is evident there is a God :
 And these are awful truths which well deserve
 To be contemplated by multitudes,
 Who spend the largest portion of their lives
 As folly, vice or fashion tempt them on,
 Regardless of their future destiny,
 And for the allurements of the present day,
 Risk the eternal safety of their souls.

The Substance of a plain extempore Discourse, preached at Benenden, Kent, on Sunday Evening, Nov. 20, 1825, to a respectable and attentive Audience assembled in an Oasthouse. By T. Payne.

Phil. ii. 5—11 : " Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God," &c.

TRINITARIANS and Unitarians entertain different and opposite views in relation to God, to Christ, and the genuine meaning of several texts of scripture. The former maintain, that in the unity of the Godhead, there are three persons of the same substance, equal in power and glory; neither of them greater or less than the other; neither of them before or after the other, but co-equal and co-eternal together. The latter maintain, that the infinite Deity, the Lord of heaven and earth, is *one being*; and that he has *no equal*. Trinitarians maintain, that Jesus, the Messiah, was the second person in the Trinity, who laid aside his glory, came down from heaven and assumed manhood; that he was perfect God and perfect man, in one person; equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead, inferior to the Father, as touching his manhood. Unitarians maintain, that Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God, was the real and very Christ. Trinitarians maintain, that several texts of scripture apply to the deity of Christ which are inapplicable to his manhood, and that other texts apply to his manhood which are inapplicable to his deity: for instance, when he says, " My Father is greater than I," that this is true as applying to his manhood, but would be *untrue* if applied to his godhead. Unitarians reject this mode of interpretation as utterly destitute of proof; and maintain, that whatever is said in the Scriptures concerning Jesus, the Christ, applies to him as a man, commissioned and qualified by his God. Both parties lay claim to our text as containing their respective opinions. Now

both these opinions cannot be true. And does it not appear to you, my Christian friends, of high importance for us to attain right views of God, of Christ, and of the genuine sense of the Holy Scriptures? Let us, then, humbly look to God our Father for his blessing, and with unprejudiced minds turn our attention to a careful examination of this subject. Let us first attend to the Trinitarian view of the text.

"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." This verse Trinitarians apply to the deity of Christ before his incarnation. "But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." This verse they apply to his laying aside his glory, coming down out of heaven and assuming manhood. "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Here Trinitarians completely change their position, and, instead of applying the pronoun *he* to the same antecedent which they had in their minds before, namely, a co-equal deity, they apply it to the *manhood* which this co-equal deity (according to their views) assumed. And the evident reason of this is, because common sense will not suffer them to believe that the Jews killed the Almighty. Some have used expressions implying a belief that God actually died: "Behold! a God descends and dies." "God, the mighty Maker, died." But this is not what they really mean, therefore we ought not to charge them with it. Ask them, Do you believe that God died? They will readily answer, No; God could not die nor suffer pain; it was the humanity, the humanity *only*, that suffered and died.

Let us now examine this interpretation of the text: and first, it stands directly opposed to that great first principle both of natural and revealed religion—the Unity of God. That God is one, is confirmed by the plainest declarations of scripture: "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah." Twenty-six times in Isaiah is he styled the "High and Lofty One," "the Holy One of Israel;" but not once called the *holy three*. The unity of God is taught in more than two thousand texts of scripture, where singular pronouns are used as applying to deity. "Thou shalt have none other gods before me," i. e. in my presence. "I am the Lord," "I am God, and there is none else." "Is there a God besides me? Yea, there is no

God; I know not any." Jesus expressly calls his Father "the only true God." And St. Paul says, "There is one God and Father of all, who is above all." Ought we, then, in direct opposition to this plain evidence, to admit that there are *three* almighty beings, equal in power and glory? Surely not.

Secondly. The above interpretation of the text stands opposed to the unity of Christ, and represents the *one Mediator* as a compound being, as two distinct beings in one person; so distinct, that the one suffered pain while the other did not feel any; the one was oppressed with grief and sorrow, while the other was perfectly happy; the one to be dead, while the other remained alive. But Jesus always spoke of himself as one, and he is always spoken of in the Scriptures as one. In our text, the same who was "in the form of God—humbled himself, and was obedient unto death," the very person who died, was exalted. "God hath made that same Jesus who was crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Thirdly. If Jesus, the Messiah, was co-equal with God the Father, he must have all wisdom and power in himself. But he always spoke of himself as receiving every thing from his God: "I can of my ownself do nothing." "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me." "The Father who dwelleth in me, he doeth the work." "He spent whole nights in prayer to God."

Fourthly. If his making "himself of no reputation, and taking upon him the form of a servant," means his laying aside his glory, coming down out of heaven and assuming manhood, we ask, Wherein is this a suitable example for us? How, in this sense, are we to "let the same mind be in us that was also in Christ Jesus"? Are we co-equal deity also?

Fifthly. View him as co-equal with God, and we ask, How in the nature of things is such a being to be exalted? In what higher station is it possible for him to be placed? The objector will reply, He first humbled himself, and therefore it was from that state of humiliation that he was exalted. Are we then to view the unchangeable Deity as changing his form and condition from one state to another? Surely not.

The Trinitarian sense of our text, therefore, being weighed in the balance, is found wanting.

Let us now examine the Unitarian interpretation of this passage.

To be in the form of God is of the same signification as being in the *image* of God, and it implies a *likeness* or resemblance to God. "So God created man in his own image, in the likeness of God." "We all—beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image." "Put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the *image* of him that created him." Jesus, the Christ, was in the form or image of God, as the spirit of Jehovah rested upon him; "the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might; the spirit of knowledge, and the fear of the Lord." He was fully instructed in the will of God. He knew what was in man. "He did not judge after the sight of the eye, nor reprove after the hearing of the ear." "But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?" The winds and the seas obeyed his command. His powerful word gave sight to the blind, and raised the dead to life. He was in the form of God in relation to his spotless purity. He was pure and without transgression. He was in the form of God, as king in his holy hill of Zion, to establish a universal kingdom, and as the universal judge. He was in the form of God, on the mount of transfiguration, where "his face did shine as the sun, and his garment was white as the light." He received from God the Father, honour and glory." But he did not eagerly grasp at appearing as God. No, his Father gave him a commandment to lay down his life. He must first suffer before he entered into his glory. "And behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias; who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem," in humble obedience to the will of his God and Father.

"He took on him the form of a servant" or slave. He did not desire worldly show and reputation. "He did not cry nor lift up and cause his voice to be heard in the street." He did not covet to appear before men, with his face "shining as the sun, and his raiment white as the light;" nor, that this glory conferred on him should be known. "Tell the vision," said he, "to no man, till the Son of Man be risen from the dead." He that was thus rich subjected himself to poverty. "The foxes have holes,

the birds of the air have nests ; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." He did not eagerly grasp on entering immediately into his glory ; but was obedient even unto death, and gave himself up into the hands of his murderers. " And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he *steadfastly* set his face to go up to Jerusalem." " Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes ; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles ; and they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him ; and the third day he shall rise again." " Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I am commanded to lay it down that I may receive it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." And now, my friends, let us with wonder and gratitude see this great sight. With what solemnity do we behold him eating the last passover with his disciples ; and saying, " With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you, before I suffer." " A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you." He then instituted a memorial of his sufferings and death, and gave them his dying request and command : " This do in remembrance of me." Follow him into the garden of Gethsemane, there view him in an agony, sweating great drops of blood and praying, " Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me : nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt. O, my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." See him betrayed, taken, bound, and led away as a felon to the judgment hall. There behold him derided, falsely accused, condemned, scourged, spit upon, and led forth, bearing his cross to the place of crucifixion. Follow him to Calvary. There behold him hanging between two thieves ; while the priests, the rulers and the multitude stand round reviling him and saying, " Thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." But though he was thus " reviled, he reviled not again," but lifting up his eyes he prayed, saying, " Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Was ever innocence so insulted ; was ever dignity so degraded ! Is this he whose command the

winds and the seas obeyed? Is this the beloved Son of God, whose face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light? Is this the man appointed of God to be the judge of quick and dead? O, what a sight is here! He hung bleeding on the cross, and darkness spread her veil over the land. He expired, and nature groaned at his death. He was laid in the tomb, and his enemies triumphed—while his followers mourned and wept. But God would not suffer his “holy one to see corruption.” The third morning opened its glimmering ray—an angel descended and rolled away the stone from the sepulchre: and,

“Lo, he rises from the tomb,
Glowing with immortal bloom.”

Now his sufferings are ended—his obedience is approved—his character is established—his mission is confirmed; and, having finished the work that was given him to do, “he ascended to his Father and our Father, to his God and our God.” “He hath ascended up on high; he hath led captivity captive; he hath received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.” “He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore” (as his glorious reward) “God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,” (to his authority,) “of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” “All power is given unto” him “in heaven and in earth.” And, now, with what majestic grandeur he speaks: “Fear not. I am the first and the last. I am he that liveth, *and was dead*; and, behold I am alive for ever more, amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.”

And now, brethren, I appeal to you; is there any thing in this view of the text which stands opposed to the unity of God, or that requires us to make the wretched shift of applying one verse in the text to Christ the God and another to Jesus the man? Is there any thing here that contradicts the plain declarations of Jesus the Christ, that he received every thing from his God, or that makes his exaltation a mere unmeaning nothing—placing him only where he was before? No. All is in harmony: and the example in the text illustrates and enforces the precept,

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Here, then, we behold the humility, the resignation, love, meekness, patience and obedience of our great pattern and exemplar, "Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Let us, then, labour to have the same mind in us that was in Christ Jesus; and learn of him "who was meek and lowly in heart." Whatever we possess, let us learn of him to be humble. Whatever we endure, let us learn of him to be patient and resigned to the will of God. Wherever duty calls, let us learn to persevere, obedient to his authority. Let us run the race set before us, copying his example. So shall we share in his exaltation. How cheering his declaration to his followers: "I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father has appointed me a kingdom"! "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift."

The Prayer: O thou high and lofty One, who inhabitest eternity; thou who art the Creator, the Lord of heaven and of earth, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; we adore and praise thee, that we are brought to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus, the anointed, whom thou hast sent. O pour thy blessing upon us, that we may be true worshipers and worship thee, the Father, in spirit and in truth. In thy presence, O God, we profess our subjection to him whom thou hast appointed King in thy holy hill of Zion, and head over all things to thy church. We reverence thy Son. May we ever prove ourselves to be his disciples indeed, by doing whatsoever he has commanded us; and so abide in him, that when he shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming. Amen.

American Unitarian Publications.

SIR,

London, Jan. 5, 1826.

Your correspondent, I. W., (p. 414,) is desirous that "some person in London or Liverpool will give out proposals to accomplish the purpose mentioned in your Repository for August, p. 483, of supplying our libraries with some of the most valuable American periodicals." I believe I am correct in stating, that Mr. Rowland Hunter has

made arrangements for this end, so that it is hoped the difficulties heretofore existing in procuring the works of our Transatlantic Unitarian brethren will be in a great degree removed.

A. B.

Mr. Moore on the Divine Origin and Authority of the Sabbath.

(LETTER II.)

SIR,

IN my last letter * it was shewn that, according to the Mosaic account, the consecration of the Sabbath is coeval with the existence of man, and that it was designed for universal observance. This surely implies that the institution was made known to our first parent, and it is not reasonable to suppose that he and his descendants, who lived in the fear of God, would neglect an ordinance of so much importance; for what were the use of setting apart one day in seven for religious purposes, if this institution were kept secret or totally disregarded? It has been objected, however, that no mention is made of the Sabbath during the patriarchal ages, and this is true; but from this omission it by no means follows, that no observance of the day took place during that period. There is at least no proof that such was the case. At the time of the calling of Abraham the world was immersed in idolatry, and consequently the worship of the living and true God, in any form or at any time, was neglected in proportion. The history of this patriarch and of the families that descended from him is extremely concise, and still more deficient are the occasional notices of their religious observances. In this brief, though interesting narrative there was no particular occasion for the mention of the Sabbath. The number of the patriarchs was comparatively small; and their mode of life, being pastoral, and wandering as they did from place to place for the convenience of pasture, was unfavourable to any thing like regularity in the observance of stated religious seasons and the practice of social worship. If in such circumstances the Sabbath were neglected, this would furnish no argument against it, and would be no

example for us. However, it is not probable that so important an institution, designed as it was, on Divine authority, for the observance of all men from the beginning, should not be made known to the patriarchal tribes, or that it should be entirely overlooked by them; and there is one passage in the Old Testament which affords at least some reason to believe this was not the case, namely, Exod. xvi. 4—30. At the time when the manna was given to the Israelites in the Wilderness, they were commanded to gather enough on the sixth day to supply their necessities on the seventh, and on that day none descended, that the people might have leisure for the observance of it as the Sabbath. This was before the giving of the law from mount Sinai. And it deserves to be observed, moreover, that there is nothing whatever on this occasion of that solemnity in the circumstances and the manner of announcing a new law, which, judging from other instances, we must conclude, and especially in the case of so important a law as that of the Sabbath, would have taken place, had this institution been unknown before: the people are merely directed (vers. 4 and 5) to gather twice as much on the sixth day as on the other days of the week; a direction perfectly sufficient on the supposition that the Sabbath had been previously instituted, but extremely defective if it had not. The manner also in which Moses immediately afterwards speaks of this day is a clear indication that the Sabbath was at that time no new institution: "Six days shall ye gather it, but on the seventh is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none." And again, the expression, (ver. 23,) "To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath of the Lord," evidently signifies the day appointed by Jehovah to be kept holy to him, and refers, no doubt, to the original institution of this ordinance, as related in Gen. ii. Besides, it is obvious, as Hallet has shewn,* that Moses is here speaking of the days of the week, and that when he mentions the seventh day, he means not the seventh from the first descent of the manna, but the last day of the week; and the people understood him, which proves that they were no strangers to this mode of reckoning, or consequently to the Sabbath. Some of them, indeed, as there had always been those among them who paid little regard

* See his Exposition of the Ten Commandments, Discourse VI.

to the commands of God, went out on the seventh day to gather manna, but found that none had fallen. "And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for the Lord hath given you the Sabbath; therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days: abide ye every man in his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day." The falling of the manna, therefore, did not regulate the Sabbath, but the Sabbath the falling of the manna. And from the whole, therefore, it seems reasonable to conclude, as observed before, that the Sabbath was not at this time a new institution to the Israelites. And, if so, it may be inquired, Whence did this people obtain their knowledge of this institution, and of the obligation under which they were laid to hold it in veneration? Certainly it was not obtained during the bondage of Egypt, where their unfeeling task-masters would not fail to extract from them incessantly all the labour they were capable of enduring; nor do I know of any method of accounting for it, but by supposing that it was handed down to them from their forefathers the patriarchs, though the revival of the religious observance of the Sabbath would be necessary after their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, in which state this custom, whatever might have been its prevalence before, was in danger of being lost altogether. Milton,[†] it is true, has founded an objection to this supposition, on the following circumstance: When the people on the sixth day, according to the Divine command, had gathered a double quantity of manna, all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses, which proves, he maintains, that they at least were not acquainted with the institution of the Sabbath. This, however, is by no means a necessary inference, nor, indeed, a reasonable inference. It is founded on a mistaken view of the passage. It was the business of the rulers to see that the people obeyed the command that had been given them on this occasion, (ver. 5,) and all they did was informing Moses that the people had done so, nor does the reply of Moses give support to any other signification of these words. Were we to suppose that all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses that the people had gathered a double portion of manna on

* Treatise of Christian Doctrine, &c. B. I. Ch. x.

this occasion, as if they had done something wrong, and to them altogether unaccountable, and were we thence to infer that these rulers were unacquainted with the Sabbath, we must also of necessity infer that they were equally unacquainted with the command given them on the present occasion, though the people themselves understood and obeyed it without hesitation. This would be to the last degree absurd, for the rulers of course would be the first to receive the command, and would probably be the instruments of conveying it to the people. The remarks of Moses, in his reply to the rulers, evidently refer to the original consecration of the seventh day as the Sabbath.

Milton again, like many others, has observed,* "Since the Sabbath was originally an ordinance of the Mosaic law, since it was given to the Israelites alone, and that for the express purpose of distinguishing them from other nations, it follows that if those who live under the gospel are emancipated from the ordinances of the law in general, least of all can they be considered as bound by that of the Sabbath, the distinction being abolished which was the special cause of its institution." The premises here being entirely erroneous, the inference also is wholly without foundation. The Sabbath is *not* an ordinance originating in the Mosaic law, if the account of it, by Moses himself, is to be received, neither was it given to the Israelites alone for the express purpose of distinguishing them from other nations, for we have shewn, that the appointment and observance of it took place before the Jewish law had existence, and were altogether independent of it; in other words, that the Sabbath was originally intended for the observance of all who should worship the sole Creator, to whatever nation they might belong.

This, as intimated in my first letter, receives sufficient confirmation, even from the fourth commandment itself, given to the Jews with all possible solemnity from Sinai, Exod. xx. 8, &c. : "*Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God, &c. ; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day : wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath, and hallowed it.*"

* Treatise of Christian Doctrine, &c., B. II. Ch. vii.

Here then we remark, first, that the observance of the Sabbath is enjoined, not as a *new* ordinance, but as one that had been already instituted. *Remember* the Sabbath-day, &c. Ancient customs are apt to decline gradually, and to grow out of recollection and regard: maintain, therefore, the observance of this with the greatest care and attention. Secondly, the expressions, "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God," evidently allude to the original appointment of the Sabbath, and imply that the day should be devoted perpetually and universally to holy, that is, to religious purposes; and, lastly, the reason here given for the institution, "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth," &c., is the same as at the original consecration of the day, and so far from restricting the observance of it to the Jews, the obligation suggested by it applies equally to all mankind. And be it observed that this is the only reason given here, as at the first, for the setting apart one day in seven, not for rest only, but for special religious observance. The Sabbath, then, as Milton himself admits,* was designed originally as a memorial of the creation of the world. It was intended to afford an opportunity, recurring frequently and perpetually, of celebrating the perfections and providence of God, as;

* Milton's inconsistency is remarkable enough. He affirms in one place, (B. II. Ch. vii.,) that the seventh day was consecrated to God from the beginning of the world, and refers to Gen. ii. 3, and he speaks of it also as designed as a memorial of the creation; but, at the same time, he maintains that it was neither observed nor commanded till after the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt; and in another place, (B. I. Ch. x.,) he supposes that Moses inserted the sentence, Gen. ii. 2, 3, from the fourth commandment into what appeared a suitable place for it. With this supposition, however, we have no concern whatever; it is perfectly gratuitous, and serves only to shew that there was a difficulty on his side of the question which he knew not how otherwise to obviate. But if such liberties are to be taken with the Scriptures, they become a mere nose of wax to be moulded into any form that may suit a particular purpose. We shall take the narrative of Moses as it stands, and from that it appears, that the fourth commandment was founded upon the original institution of the Sabbath immediately after the creation of man, and was intended, not to establish a new ordinance, but to enforce and perpetuate an old one. What meaning, moreover, can there be in consecrating the day to God from the beginning of the world, and appointing it as a memorial of the creation, if the obligation to observe it were not made known, or if it were not intended to be practically attended to from the beginning? Such a supposition is in the highest degree absurd and contradictory.

displayed in his works, and diffusing life and enjoyment through an infinite variety of channels to all the creatures of his intelligence and power. What, therefore, it may be asked, could be more rational or appropriate than the origin of the Sabbath, or what more salutary or beneficial than its tendency and design?

Again; it is to be observed, that the command enjoining the observance of the Sabbath was associated in the most solemn manner with others of a religious, moral and practical kind, all of which are admitted to be of universal obligation. It is one of the ten, of which Moses thus speaks to the people: "These words Jehovah spake unto all your assembly in the Mount, out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice, and *he added no more*; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone, and delivered them to me." Thus they were separated from the rest of the law by circumstances calculated to make the deepest impression on the mind, and afterward placed, by Divine command, in the ark, as a deposit the most sacred and inviolable. How comes it to pass, then, that one of these only is at present to be rejected? Nine of them at least are allowed to be independent of the Jewish or any other ritual, and why this should be thus classed in the most solemn manner with them, and held equally sacred, if it were not intended to be equally independent, and also of perpetual and universal obligation, it is difficult to imagine. Milton's assertion, * that "these commandments are evidently nothing more than a summary of the whole Mosaic law, as the fourth, in particular, is of the whole ceremonial, which, therefore, can contain nothing applicable to the gospel worship," is perfectly unfounded. The chief features of the Jewish law were circumcision, sacrifices, and the Levitical rites and ceremonies. Had these been briefly mentioned in the ten commandments, there might have been some reason for considering them as containing a summary of the whole law. But under what pretence the command to observe the Sabbath can be represented as a summary of the whole of these extremely numerous, burdensome and expensive ceremonies, it is not easy to say. And upon this supposi-

* Treatise, &c., B. II. Ch. vii.

tion, as the Mosaic law is now abolished, so the ten commandments being a summary of it, all of them are now alike deprived of this divine sanction. The conclusion appears to be inevitable, that the observance of the Sabbath is thus solemnly classed with duties of universal and indispensable obligation, in order to shew that this observance was intended to be also universal and perpetual.

The remaining notices of the Sabbath in the Hebrew Scriptures are indeed numerous, but as they are of less importance than the preceding, I shall pass them over as briefly as possible.

In *Exod. xxiii. 12*, the observance of the Sabbath is enforced from a motive that well deserves regard: "Six days shalt thou do all thy work, and on the seventh day shalt thou rest; that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thine handmaid, and the stranger may be refreshed." Those who are most disposed to think hardly of Jewish severity, and to quarrel with the Sabbath, will at least admire the humane and considerate purpose by which this institution is thus recommended.

In *Exod. xxxi. 12, &c.*, the injunction to observe the Sabbath is repeated with the greatest solemnity, and at considerable length: even the punishment of death is annexed to the smallest infringement of that holy rest with which it was then required to be kept sacred. The true reason for its original institution, and which, as insisted on before, is applicable to all mankind, is also given: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth." But I am aware that it will be objected that the Sabbath is mentioned here, and in other places, as "a perpetual covenant, and a sign between Jehovah and the children of Israel for ever," and that, therefore, it was peculiar to them. The answer to this, however, is easy. All other nations were devoted to the abominable vices and follies of idolatry; but the Sabbath, being appointed as a memorial of the creation of the world, the Jews, by observing it, would shew their belief in the one living and true God, and their adherence to his service: this would be the test by which the true worshipers of God would be distinguished from idolaters; so that this language is in favour of the universal obligation to the observance of the Sabbath, rather than against it. It was inseparably annexed to the worship and service of the sole Creator of all things, and

would be a sign, not to the Jews only, but to all others who lived in obedience to his commands, of their allegiance to him, and their submission to his will.

As this letter has already occupied too large a portion of your pages, I must defer my remarks on the remaining passages in the Old and New Testament on the Sabbath to a future opportunity.

THOS. MOORE.

Milton's Treatise of Christian Doctrine.

SIR,

Clapton, January 15, 1826.

IN your last Volume, (p: 424,) I quoted Milton's satisfactory appeal to the recorded doctrine of Christ, who "has shewn in so many modes how he and the Father are one." Thus, "setting aside reason," and having "recourse again to the language of scripture," we found him explaining *John* x. 20, (*I and my Father are one*,) that favourite text of the *orthodox*, and proving, from the conclusive testimony of scripture, that they are not "one in essence, as it is commonly interpreted."

I now accompany Milton to the well-known passage on the *heavenly witnesses*, (1 *John* v. 7,) of which he says, that "according to the general opinion" it "affords the clearest foundation for the received doctrine of the essential unity of the three persons;" and further (in *Chap. VI.*), that "it is on the authority of this text, almost exclusively, that the whole doctrine of the Trinity has been hastily adopted."

In assigning so much importance, in the judgment of the *orthodox*, to a passage which a great majority of learned modern Trinitarians have rejected as spurious, Milton was fully justified by what had passed in his own age and country. The *Assembly of Divines* were as ready to impose a religion, or at least the profession of it, on the people, under the authority of a Parliament who ought to have found other employment, as ever Laud had shewn himself, when sustained by the prerogative of an arbitrary and misguided King. In 1648, the Assembly "presented to both Houses of Parliament," as the result of their learned theological labours, their "Confession of Faith, together with the larger and lesser Catechisms." These are now before me, as printed in 1658, and as still imposed for the only Christianity they are allowed to profess, on all

the members of the Established Church of Scotland. The Trinity is defined in the proposition, that "there are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory." In the lesser or "shorter Catechism," designed for the initiation of youth, the only *proofs* appended to this proposition are the passage in question (1 John v. 7) and the baptismal form (Matt. xxviii. 19). In the other declarations of doctrine, the Trinity is further proved, at least to the satisfaction of the Assembly, by adding the narrative of Christ's baptism by Matthew, the apostolical benediction, (2 Cor. xiii. 14,) and the passage which Milton so fully considers (John x. 30). Thus, in Sir I. Newton's phrase, was this text (1 John v. 7) "accounted the main text for the business."

Milton, however, remarks, that this text "no more necessarily proves those to be essentially one who are said to be one in heaven, than it proves those to be essentially one who are said to be one on earth." He adds, that "not only Erasmus," whose *orthodoxy* was indeed more than suspected, "but even Beza, however unwillingly, acknowledged, (as may be seen in their own writings,) that if John be really the author of the verse, he is only speaking here of an unity of agreement and testimony." Again (Chap. VI.) he refers to Beza as "generally a staunch defender of the Trinity," (and he certainly advocated the burning of *Servetus* for denying it,) who "understands the phrase *unum sunt* to mean, *agree in one*." Milton might have added, that in the authorized English version of 1591, the words (ver. 7) *are one*, are explained in the margin, after Beza, to mean, like the eighth verse, *agree in one*. Calvin, also, as quoted by Father Simon, says in his commentary on the text, "That expression, three are one, does not denote the essence, but the consent." The same biblical critic, Simon, says of the text, that "the most learned interpreters of the New Testament do not expound it with reference to the Trinity;" and that "such ancient ecclesiastical writers as have applied it to that mystery, followed the custom of that time, which was to give the scripture such a theological sense as was accommodated to the faith then received in the church."—Milton proceeds to remark, that "what it is they testify, appears in the 5th and 6th verses, namely, that *he that overcometh the world is he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God, even*

Jesus, Christ, that is, *the anointed*; therefore he is not one with, or equal to him that anointed him. Thus the very record that they bear is inconsistent with the essential unity of the witnesses, which is attempted to be deduced from the passage."

The learned author of the Treatise was, however, sufficiently aware of "circumstances which in the opinion of many render the passage suspicious." He instances, "that this verse is wanting in the Syriac and the other two Oriental versions, the Arabic and the Ethiopic, as well as in the greater part of the ancient Greek manuscripts, and that in those manuscripts which actually contain it, many various readings occur." Here Dr. Sumner remarks, that "with respect to the Greek manuscripts, Milton expresses himself cautiously;" for, as "it now appears, the clause is not found in any Greek manuscript written before the 16th century." I need scarcely remind the reader how much has been done since the age of Milton to settle this question, and that the result of critical investigation has been to the prejudice of the disputed text, though a learned Unitarian, very laudably devoted to biblical researches, has just now appeared in favour of its authenticity.

Milton next considers the Trinitarian argument, that "although scripture does not say in express words that the Father and the Son are one in essence," yet "the name and attributes and works of God, as well as divine honours, are habitually ascribed to the Son." To this he replies, "that wherever they are attributed to the Son, it is in such a manner that they are easily understood to be attributable in their original and proper sense to the Father alone; and that the Son acknowledges himself to possess whatever share of deity is assigned to him, by virtue of the peculiar gift and kindness of the Father; to which the apostles also bear their testimony (*quicquid Filio Deitatis tribuitur, id omne Filium fateri se Patris dono singulari ac beneficio possidere, idemque apostolos testari*).

"Those who, while they believe in the unity of God, yet maintain that the Father alone is not God, insist, that wherever the name of God is attributed to the Father alone, the name of the Father, who is unity, (*unius Patris nomen*,) should be understood to signify the three persons, or the whole essence of the Trinity, not the single person of the Father." This Milton censures as "on many accounts a ridiculous distinction, (*distinctio absurda*,) and

invented solely for the purpose of supporting their peculiar opinion; although, in reality, instead of supporting it, it will be found to be dependent on it." Thus freely he animadvert on "the first" of "two gratuitous concessions" demanded by the *orthodox*.

"The second postulate is, that wherever the Son attributes Deity to the Father alone, and as to one greater than himself, he must be understood to speak in his human character, or as mediator." Yet, admitting it "wherever the context and the fact itself require this interpretation," Milton contends that "it can never be inferred from hence that he is one God with the Father," and he scruples not "to deny the proposition wherever it is to be conceded, not to the sense of the passage, but merely to serve their own theory." In opposition to this he expects to "prove that what the Son attributes to the Father, he attributes in his filial, or even in his divine character to the Father as God of God, (*Patri tanquam Dei Deo*), and not to himself under any title or pretence whatever."

All that Milton designed by calling our Saviour *God*, he afterwards fully explains. Thus when "it is strenuously urged that the Son is sometimes called God, and even *Jehovah*," he replies, "that the name of God is not unfrequently ascribed by the will and concession of God the Father, even to angels and men, how much more then to the only-begotten Son, the image of the Father!" He finds "the name of God attributed to angels, because, as heavenly messengers, they bear the appearance of the divine glory and person, and even speak in the very words of the Deity. Hence, even the holiest of men were troubled in mind when they had seen an angel, as if they had seen God himself." He further remarks, that "the name of God is ascribed to judges, because they occupy the place of God to a certain degree in the administration of judgment;" adding, "that the Son, who was entitled to the name of God both in the capacity of a messenger and of a judge, and indeed in virtue of a much better right, did not think it foreign to his character, when the Jews accused him of blasphemy because he made himself God, to allege in his own defence the very reason which has been advanced, (*John* x. 34,) especially when God himself had called the judges, Sons of the Most High." He further sustains his argument by a reference to Paul's contrast (*1 Cor.* viii. 4, 5) between the "one God" and the "one

Lord" of Christians and the "gods many and lords many" which were "in heaven or in earth." I propose in the next letter to return to the course of Milton's *Treatise*, where he proceeds to shew how "the Son teaches that the attributes of divinity belong to the Father alone, to the exclusion even of himself."

J. T. RUTT.

INTELLIGENCE.

Abstract of the Second Half-yearly Report of the Somerset, Gloucester and Wilts Unitarian Missionary Association.

THE Committee give the following Report of what they have done since the last half-yearly meeting; and, considering how extremely limited their means are and the many difficulties which still lie in their way, they trust it will be found that they have neither been inactive nor injudicious in the course they have pursued; they also hope that what has been already effected will convince the impartial that an Unitarian Missionary Association was necessary in this district, and is calculated to be of essential service to the Unitarian cause. Their attention has been particularly directed to those congregations which are in a sinking state; and they have used every endeavour in their power to strengthen those friends who remain, and to promote the revival and success of the Unitarian cause among them: with this view they have adopted the plan of week-evening lectures by ministers connected with the Association, which has been attended with more success than could reasonably be expected in the time. It may be proper to give a more particular account, of the places where such lectures have been preached.

Marshfield.

The cause in this town was ready to perish, and it may with truth be said, that had it not been for this Association it must have sunk, and the chapel would probably at this time have been in the hands of another denomination. Feeling the necessity of finding a minister for Marshfield without delay, in order to preserve the place, the Committee engaged Mr. Henry Hawkes, a Glasgow student, to supply as a minister during the recess at that University. They are happy to say Mr. Hawkes' labours have been attended with more success at Marshfield than had been anticipated; he has more than doubled the congregation, established a Sunday-school, a Fellowship Fund, and a Congregational Library. As Mr. Hawkes must return to Glasgow, the Committee have felt it absolutely necessary to provide a successor to him, and are happy to say they have succeeded in engaging the Rev. Samuel Martin, now a Missionary in Cornwall, to come to Marshfield at the close of his present

engagement in the West; and from Mr. M.'s known character and tried abilities, they anticipate not only further success to the cause in that town, but that it will receive considerable aid from his active labours in several other places.

Calne.

At Calne the Unitarian cause has, for a considerable time, been in a low state; but the few friends who remain there, are very respectable, hospitable and zealous: they began to despair of being able to keep up Unitarian worship publicly, when it shall please God to remove their present worthy minister, who is very far advanced in years; but the establishment and operations of this Association have revived their hopes and enlivened their zeal. The week-evening lectures have been well attended.

Bradford.

When Mr. Wright came to reside in Wiltshire, Unitarian worship had been discontinued in this town ten years, and the chapel generally lent to the Calvinists. Mr. Wright was, however, admitted to the reoccupation of it, preaches there regularly on a Sunday morning, stands as the stated minister of it, and has succeeded in increasing the congregation. The ministers, who delivered lectures at Bradford have, on the following evening, preached at

Trowbridge,

which is about three miles distant. Considering the difficulty of obtaining any change of ministers at that place, this has been a pleasing circumstance, and favourable to the progress of the cause in that populous town.

The Committee having been informed that the Presbyterian chapel at Thornbury was without a minister, that some of the members of the congregation were Unitarians, and the late minister at least favourable to Unitarianism, and quite liberal in his preaching, thought it a duty to make inquiry how far it might be right and practicable to secure the place to the Unitarian part of the congregation: but they were too late, for the Calvinist Methodists possessed themselves of the chapel and brought over the majority of the congregation to be in their favour. The only thing that remained was to advise the Unitarians to meet together in a room to worship the one God, edify one another, and do what might be in their power to enlighten their neighbours. This plan, there is reason to hope, they will adopt, and they were furnished with some books to assist them in it.

The Committee have continued to use all the means in their power to gain further information respecting the state of the cause in different parts of the district, and in particular where congregations once existed which were in whole or in part Unitarian, in some of which they hope shortly to open rooms for Unitarian preaching.

Since the last half-yearly meeting, this Association has formed a friendly union with the Somerset and Dorset Unitarian Association, and has also become a branch of the "British and Foreign Unitarian Association."

Kent and Sussex Unitarian Missionary Association.

SIR,

THE Unitarian Association for Kent and eastern part of Sussex, after the regular employment of Mr. M. Harding, as Missionary, for the last four years, have been compelled by a diminution of their funds to terminate their engagement with this zealous "Advocate of the faith once delivered to the saints." The friends of Unitarianism residing within the operation of this Association, deeply regret that Mr. Harding should be thus arrested in his useful career, and that the sacred cause in which they are engaged be, in this part of the kingdom, deprived of his support. They are, however, in some measure consoled by the reflection that considerable, and they hope lasting good, has been effected by the Missionary exertions in which the Association has been employed. The Committee beg to make the following extract from the Missionary's Report, made at the Annual Meeting of the Association holden at Chatham, the 29th of June last :

"Though the past year fails to furnish us with a record of the brilliant victories of truth over error, it supplies facts and circumstances which cannot fail to be highly gratifying. Preparations have been made for building at least two chapels for the worship of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, where but for the existence and influence of this Association, the attempt would not so much as have been thought of ; and last, but by no means the least, this Association has had the honour and happiness of being signally instrumental in saving a handsome chapel (viz. at Cranbrook) from being sold by public auction, and converted to common purposes. The reflection of having secured valuable premises, rendered additionally so from containing the ashes of revered worthy predecessors, and of being the means also, under the Divine blessing, of perpetuating the sacred cause of Truth in a populous town, will, if duly appreciated, never fail to impart a rich anticipation of glorious recompense."

The Committee persuade themselves that the members of the Association, and the friends of pure, undefiled religion generally, will readily lend their aid towards enabling them to give some regular and effectual assistance to the rising societies at Sheerness, Biddenden, and Benenden, and for keeping up the interests of the Association, which has now been in existence for thirteen years. It will be immediately seen, that though the resources of the society may not allow of the constant employment of a Missionary, yet that a much smaller sum

than would be required for this purpose may be still raised and advantageously employed. The Committee therefore take this opportunity of soliciting the continued contributions of the public, and of impressing on the members of the Association the necessity of renewed and increasing exertions in the work in which they are engaged.—The Committee think it due to the character of their late Missionary to publish the following testimonial with which they furnished him on his quitting the office which he had so usefully and so honourably sustained:—

“This is to certify that Mr. M. Harding has for the last four years, under the direction of the Kent and Sussex Unitarian Association, acted in the two counties as Unitarian Missionary. And the Committee lend their willing testimony to the ability and good conduct which he has in that capacity displayed, and to the success which has in several instances attended upon his labours; and they much regret that the limited funds of the institution prevent their continuing him in the office.”

On behalf of the Committee,

JOHN GREEN, Secretary.

Clerical Intolerance.

[From Besley's Exeter News, Nov. 25, 1825.]

It will scarcely be credited that, in this enlightened age, a Clergyman could be found superstitious enough to deny Christian Burial to an infant, because it had not been baptized! Such superstition, however, does exist. A child of Mr. George Mortimer, of Islington, in this county, aged about twelve months, died last Monday. The time fixed for the funeral was Thursday afternoon. On Wednesday the grandfather of the child, Mr. John Mortimer, called on the Rev. William Woolcombe, the Clergyman of the parish, and requested him to attend; but was astonished (as every person must be) to find that Mr. Woolcombe refused to bury the child, because it had not been baptized. The parents are Dissenters, but have their family burial-place in the parish churchyard, and there the parents wished their child to be. But who was to perform the “last sad office” over the little corpse? In this moment of difficulty the distressed parents sent to a Dissenting Minister residing at Bovey Tracey, about three miles distant, requesting him to attend, and he did so. A grave was dug, and the little corpse, followed by fourteen persons in decent mourning, and several others, was brought from the house of its parents, about a mile from the churchyard, and taken to the grave, whilst the Minister was obliged to stand on that part of the churchyard fence which was nearest the grave, and from thence the funeral address was made to the mourning attendants: and thus the melancholy ceremony was performed. Alas, for the country! When will such ignorance of real Christianity, such worse than Popish superstition, cease?

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Essay on the Character of Moses.

THERE are four several points of light in which we may consider Moses; as the head of a religious dispensation, a lawgiver, an historian, and a prophet. But we must take our account of him chiefly from the Bible. On the one hand, Josephus, with the view of enhancing the reputation of the Jews, has related many things concerning Moses which are doubtful, if not fabulous; while Tacitus, a celebrated Roman author, has gone into the opposite extreme, for the sake of vilifying a people whom he and his countrymen seem to have regarded as the dregs and "off-savouring" of mankind.

On Moses the honour was bestowed of delivering a numerous race from slavery and oppression, and of rendering them a distinct and mighty nation. His preservation from death, during his earliest infancy, was not a little memorable: and in the circumstances and the instrument of it we clearly trace the Divine hand. Having become the adopted son of the daughter of the King of Egypt, he was educated at court, and instructed in the learning of the Egyptians.* But he preferred danger to ease, the worship of the one true God to idolatry, and the active efforts of benevolence and patriotism to the luxury of a palace. When he had reached manhood, the depressed situation of his brethren, the Israelites, so affected his mind, that he burned with an eager desire of avenging their wrongs and ending their sufferings. He saw an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew; and instantly Moses slew the Egyptian. Being, in consequence, threatened by Pharaoh with capital punishment, he fled to the land of Midian, where he kept the flock of Jethro, whose daughter he married.

While he was in this situation, God commissioned him to undertake the deliverance of the Hebrews from their abject servitude. If any person ask, whether Moses might not, and did not, receive the suggestions of his own mind

* Acts vii. 22.

as divine communications, and whether those assurances of success on which he relied, were not merely the dictates of his enterprising spirit and fervent temper, I answer, that the event proved the contrary. It is not possible to resolve the signs and wonders wrought by him into facts short of miraculous. He who can bring himself to suppose that they were nothing more than the effects of a superior acquaintance with the powers of nature, must not be forward to charge credulity on believers in revelation. Moses, as appears from the history, was reluctant to go into the presence of Pharaoh, in order to demand from him the release of the Israelites, nor was his reluctance soon or easily overcome. In reply to the heavenly command, he urged the unwillingness of the people to credit his assertions and respect his authority: he urged his own want of the talent of persuasion; and a miracle was found necessary for the purpose of silencing his doubts.

Concerning the personal character of Moses it may be remarked, that his piety was ardent, habitual, and, for the age in which he lived, enlightened. To his honour it is recorded that he was eminently meek. But we cannot wonder that his patience and gentleness were occasionally disturbed by the provocations which he experienced from the obstinacy and perverseness of the Israelites. Sacred history is not silent respecting the blemishes of his character and the errors of his conduct; both of which, however, bore a very small proportion to his virtues. In Moses superior talents were adorned by a strict and uniform adherence to religious principle, by the warmest love to his country, by unremitting fidelity to the interests of those of whom he had the care, and by a solicitude to administer impartial justice. It is evident that he was signally qualified for being the mediator between God and the seed of Abraham, for acting as the head of a religious dispensation, the grand object of which was to preserve and spread abroad the knowledge and worship of the one Jehovah.

He is next to be regarded as a lawgiver. The code which, under the especial sanction of the Deity, he enjoined on the Hebrews, was of two kinds—ecclesiastical and civil. In the ecclesiastical division of it were included the directions relating to sacrifices, festivals and the tabernacle, or, in language sometimes employed on this subject, to

holy things, times and places—in the civil division, all those which respected the temporal and national welfare of the people. As to both, he judged and acted under the immediate influence of God : yet his inspiration, doubtless, left room for the exercise of his own knowledge and sagacity.

What, though some unbelievers have attempted to cast ridicule on his numerous and minute precepts in respect of sacrifices : what, though this matter has been ill considered and represented by many of the friends of revelation ? Men of competent reflection and candour will not here be forward to express censure or astonishment. The great design of the Hebrew ritual was to guard the chosen seed from the contagion of idolatry. Every command, every prohibition, contained in the Levitical system, had this end in view. Such was the method by which Divine Wisdom saw fit to prove the fidelity and obedience of the people, and to secure them, as far as possible, from revolt against their Almighty Ruler.

In the legislative ordinances of Moses for the civil government of the Hebrews, we discern a comprehension of understanding and a humanity of temper superior not merely to the character of the laws of other states in that period of the world, but, further, to the genius of several codes in modern times and in Christian countries. Moses, as the lawgiver of the Jews, was the instrument of an unspeakably greater lawgiver : none of his institutions are calculated to promote his own honour, separately from the solid benefit of his people.

Let us now contemplate him as an historian. The first five books of the Old Testament are commonly ascribed to his pen : and, though it must be admitted that some passages of them could not, from the nature of the case, have been written by him, the usually received opinion upon this head appears correct in substance. External testimony declares that Moses was the author of these books : the style and the contents strengthen this attestation ; and it were difficult, if not impossible, to assign any other date or source of the Pentateuch.

A more interesting narrative was never presented to the world, except in the memoirs of the life of Christ, and in the records of the publication of his doctrine. It is in the highest degree simple, beautiful and grand, and every where authenticates itself. The impartiality and faithful-

ness of it are especially deserving of our notice. How earnestly solicitous is the writer to relate facts precisely as they occurred, without covering and disguise! He conceals neither the faults of his countrymen nor his own. There is evidently no wish cherished in his mind to exhibit them in any other light than that in which they really appeared. Had those who arraign the evidences of the Jewish revelation been duly just and candid, they would not have overlooked this circumstance. Their objections are, for the most part, founded on passages which the integrity of the historian would not permit him to suppress. But this integrity is a far stronger presumption of the truth of what he writes than the passages in question are against his accuracy: and, though the reasoning to which I allude has been easily and effectually repelled, the argument in favour of Judaism arises from the impression made by the whole of the history, rather than from that which is produced by detached parts. Let it be added, that those histories are usually most attractive which have been drawn up by the individuals who bore the largest share in the transactions of which they treat, and that a vast number of the events related by Moses were witnessed, and brought about by himself.

To Moses, as the instrument of God, we owe the only consistent and faithful account which exists of the origin of all things, of the creation and descent of mankind, of their varieties of language and dispersion through the world. We are further indebted to him for a narrative of the events by which the wisdom and goodness of the Deity prepared the way for the publication of Christianity, and of the measures employed, in early ages of the world, for delivering the human race from their intellectual and moral degradation.

I shall not long digress in representing the character of Moses as a poet. His historical books contain specimens of his poetical compositions. One of these* is eminently sublime, abounding in bold and noble imagery, and indicating a lofty genius, cherished by an acquaintance with the perfections and government of the one living God, and aided by supernatural inspiration. It is probable that another poem commonly attributed to him† has, in part at least, a different writer and a later date.

* Dent. xxxii.

† Psalm xc.

Among the Hebrews the characters of the poet and the prophet were frequently united in the same individual. He whom the Deity employed to foretell the fates of kingdoms and of monarchs, almost invariably uttered his predictions in the measured arrangement and the figurative style of poetry. This is in some measure true of Moses, though in a far lower degree than of other illustrious men among the ancient Israelites. Many of the prophecies of this lawgiver are delivered in the language of ordinary discourse or writing : most of them relate to the fortunes of his people ; and, however conveyed, they have been verified with a strictness and accuracy which forbid us to look on them in any other light than as the dictates of an inspired messenger of God.

Moses had the happiness of beholding, though from a distance, the land of Canaan, of which God had by him promised the possession to the children of Israel : but he was denied the honour of conducting them into that territory. There were wise and good reasons why his labours and his life should cease on his having guided his countrymen through the wilderness. In particular, Moses was not a military leader. His qualifications were of another kind : and God, who invariably selects the fittest instruments for his purposes, appointed Joshua to the office of commander of the Hebrew forces, at the very moment when such an individual was required for the command.

N.

The Rose and Snail.—A Fable.

(AFTER THE FRENCH.)

[From the Christian Register, Boston, U. S.]

A SNAIL thus once address'd the Rose :—

“ O fairest thou and sweetest flow'r
Which Flora bids her charms disclose,
And shed her sweetness through the bow'r !

“ Pardon, I pray, your humble slave,
(Pursued the Snail, with great respect,)
One only little fault you have,
Which you might easily correct.

“ I mean those sharp and ugly thorns,
Which wound whoe'er approaches near ;
Mar ev'ry beauty that adorns,
And each admirer fills with fear.

"Zephyr himself, your faithful lover,
How new, how cruel, is his case!
Dares only round your beauties hover,
And fears to meet your fond embrace!"

The poison caught: the Rose consented,
And stripp'd herself of ev'ry thorn;
But, O, how soon must be repented
The error of that cruel morn!

The guardian thorn no sooner gone,
The Snail became, from humble, free;
Easy and impudent came on,
And mounted the defenceless tree.

There, quickly cankering every leaf,
Each flow'r and op'ning bud he ate;
And now the Rose perceiv'd with grief
Her error, but perceiv'd too late!

Her fragrance gone, her beauty blasted,
And fled her young and virgin pride;
Her life was bitter while it lasted,
But soon she broke her heart—and died.

Ye fair, whom snail-like flatt'ers sue,
Mark what the awful moral shows!
Virtue is beauty's thorn in you—
But, O! be wiser than the Rose.

Mr. Moore on the Divine Origin and Authority of the Sabbath.

(LETTER III.)

SIR,

THE observance of the Sabbath is inculcated more frequently upon the Israelites, and enforced with greater solemnity, than that of any other institution that has the support of Divine authority. In *Exod. xxxv. 2*, the punishment of death is again annexed to the slightest breach of the command.

In the recapitulation of the Ten Commandments, in *Deut. v.*, there is some variation in the expressions of the fourth, which, however, is of no real importance to the question before us. An additional reason is given for the observance of the day, adapted to the peculiar circum-

stances of the Israelites, but shewing also the humane and benevolent design of the institution. "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath-day." Nothing can be more absurd and unfounded than to take occasion from hence to maintain, that the Sabbath rested on a positive command given exclusively to the Jews, as if their deliverance from Egyptian bondage were the only reason for the institution. They are reminded of their former slavery merely as furnishing an additional motive for permitting their servants to rest one day in seven as well as themselves. Even in this abridged recapitulation of the fourth commandment some reference is made to the reasons already adduced for believing that the Sabbath was intended for universal observance. "Keep the Sabbath-day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee," as in *Exod. xx. 8*, where the religious observance of the day is enjoined, as before appointed, for a memorial of the creation; which command was engraven upon stone with nine others of universal obligation, detached from the rest of the law, and deposited in the ark: and again, "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God;" that is, the day on which he ceased from the work of creation, and which, therefore, he blessed and sanctified; in other words, which he consecrated to rest and to religious purposes from the beginning.

As the punishment of death was annexed, by the Mosaic law, to a breach of the Sabbath, an instance of singular severity in the infliction of this punishment is related in *Numb. xv. 32—36*. Rigour like this, so revolting to the feelings of persons living under a dispensation of religion, just, humane and liberal as the Christian, might possibly be adapted to the very peculiar circumstances and singular character of the Hebrew nation, and might be necessary as a constant check upon their habitual propensity to the

worst abominations of idolatry, with which they were on all sides surrounded. Their government was a theocracy, and they were well assured, whatever severity there might seem in this or any other of their institutions, obedience to the laws which Divine Wisdom had appointed, Divine Power would not fail to protect and bless. At any rate, the extreme severity with which the slightest breach of the Sabbath was then punished, originated in the law of Moses, and with this Christians have no concern. Our Lord, though he has not abolished the Sabbath, has entirely done away with Jewish rigour in the observance of it.

It is a mistake to say that the law appointed no additional religious services for the Sabbath. From Leviticus xxiii. 3, we learn, that assemblies for religious purposes were required to be held on this day: "Six days shall work be done, but the seventh is a Sabbath of rest, a *holy convocation*," &c. Nor do I know what meaning to affix to this expression, if it do not signify an assembly of the people for divine worship, that is, for public prayers as well as sacrifice, which were commonly united. Such is evidently the sense in which *holy convocations* are to be understood in the 27th verse of this chapter, and in Numb. xxix. 7 and 12. Such also was the sense in which the Jews always understood this expression, for we learn from other authentic sources, as well as from various parts of the Scriptures, that the purposes to which they devoted the Sabbath, were prayers, sacrifices, the reading of the law and prophets, and expounding them. And in Numbers xxviii. 9, we are informed, that additional sacrifices were appointed for this day, particularly two lambs instead of one, both morning and evening. David, moreover, was the king chosen by God himself, who appointed specific regulations for the additional religious services on these occasions, as well as proper officers from the Levites, consisting chiefly of singers and other musicians to conduct them. He furnished also a variety of highly poetical and devout compositions, still remaining, which were recited in their assemblies on these days by the officiating Levites, and by the people alternately, so as to render the whole services completely social.*

* For further satisfaction on this subject, Dr. Jennings' *Jewish Antiquities* may be consulted, B. III. Ch. iii. See also my *Inquiry into the Scriptural Authority for Social Worship*, pages 54, &c.

The importance which the Jewish prophets attach to the observance of the Sabbath, and the connexion which they establish between this observance and the moral conduct as well as the prosperity of the people, are well worthy of our attention. They often complain of the neglect and profanation of this sacred day by the people, and administer the severest reproofs on this account; but it is remarkable that at the same time they also reprove them with equal severity for the general prevalence of idolatry, of injustice, of oppression, and extreme depravity of manners; insomuch that their prosperity invariably kept pace with their obedience to the will of God, and their obedience to the will of God with their observance of this divine institution.

Isaiah especially often laments in the strongest language the increase of iniquity in his time, and when complaining of their hypocrisy, particularly exhorts them to return without delay to a serious and proper attention to the Sabbath, as that on which their prosperity and the blessing of God most certainly depended. Isaiah lviii. 13: "If thou wilt turn thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words, then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the inheritance of Jacob, thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." The gloomy seer who succeeded the evangelical prophet, appears to have had abundant reason for the stern invectives and highly pathetic lamentations with which he so constantly and forcibly reproves the overwhelming depravity of the times in which he lived; lamentations that form the most beautiful specimens of Hebrew, or indeed of any poetry extant; and from Jeremiah we learn, (xvii. 21, &c.,) that the neglect of the Sabbath was in exact proportion to the general prevalence of irreligion and the most abominable iniquity. The prophet Ezekiel also complains, with even greater energy, if possible, of the neglect of the Sabbath in his days, and attributes to this cause chiefly the severe calamities with which the people were then visited. (Ch. xx. 12, 20.) And in the prophecy of Amos the like subjects of invective and complaint may be found (viii. 4, 5). Thus, then, it is

evident, that though the Sabbath was observed by the Jews with great solemnity in the best periods of their history, when their prosperity and obedience to the commands of God kept pace with each other, in seasons of depravity and vice they became equally remiss in their attention to it; till at length they were utterly deprived of Divine protection and support, and were driven into captivity, after the most solemn and repeated, but ineffectual, warnings of what would be the inevitable result of their inveterate and obstinate rebellion against the only Power that could save them. "These things were written for our admonition;" and is there in them no lesson of importance, no warning to Christians deserving their serious attention? The observance of the Sabbath, and the good conduct as well as prosperity of this people, it is evident, were inseparable; and we may be allowed to ask, if this institution were thus necessary to the Israelites, what good reason can be given why it should be considered as of little importance to us? Men are essentially the same in all ages, and require similar methods of moral cultivation. These considerations, surely, ought at least to make us pause before we attempt to convince mankind that there is now no authority for devoting one day in seven to moral and religious improvement.

During the captivity of the Jews under the Assyrians and Chaldeans, the various rites of their religion were suspended, and the Sabbath, of course, ceased to be observed with the same strictness and solemnity to which they had been accustomed. But on their return to their own country, after considerable obstruction by too many of the nobles of Israel and their merchants, under the influence of habits acquired during their exile, the religious observance of the day was completely restored, (Nehem. x. 30,) and from that time, as the people no more returned to idolatrous practices, this most important and salutary custom seems to have maintained its ground without interruption. In the days of our Lord, at least, the observance of it was accompanied with its ancient rigour and with even additional superstition, for they sought to stone him because he had healed the sick on that day.

Such is the history of the Sabbath from the Hebrew Scriptures, and however tedious these details may have seemed, I am mistaken if the following important propositions have not been established by them; first, the origi-

and institution of the Sabbath was altogether independent of the Mosaic law; secondly, when Moses adopted it into his ritual he confirmed, on Divine authority, this original and independent institution; thirdly, the observance of the Sabbath was intended to accompany the worship of the one living and true God at all times; and lastly, the good conduct and prosperity of the Israelites kept pace with their observance of the Sabbath, whereby an important lesson is afforded to all nations.

As to the objection, noticed by Milton, that the command to observe it was given only to the Jews, this, in fact, amounts to nothing; for the same objection applies with equal force to the commands, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me;" "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image" as an object of worship; "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain," &c., because these commands were given to the Israelites only. The fact is, the Hebrews were the only people that observed the Sabbath, because the rest of the world were idolaters, and they only enjoyed the benefit of Divine revelation. The Sabbath was connected with the worship of the sole Creator, but that worship was then confined to the Jews; and when the knowledge and the privileges of true religion were extended to all mankind by the introduction of the Christian dispensation, the observance of the Sabbath accompanied its progress universally, which would scarcely have happened had there been any thing in that dispensation inimical to this institution. Whether this be the case or not will be seen by consulting what occurs on the subject in the New Testament. The length, however, of the preceding discussion has been so much extended that what remains to be examined must be treated as briefly as possible.

And in the first place it will be admitted, that the authority of our Lord himself is the most important and decisive; and he at least has no where abolished the Sabbath. No passage can be produced in which he forbade his followers to observe it. The law for its observance, therefore, as far as he is concerned, remains unrevoked.

Secondly, our Lord's example is decisively in favour of the Sabbath. We learn from various passages in the gospels, that he was in the habit of attending the usual services of the Jews, in their synagogues, on this day. Luke iv. 16, vi. 6, xiii. 10: "At Nazareth, where he was brought

up, *as his custom was*, he entered into the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read," a sufficient proof that it was his practice to join regularly in the public religious duties of these places of worship on this day. It has been maintained, it is true, that Jesus observed all the rites, and obeyed all the precepts of the Mosaic law, because that law was not in his time abolished; but as it is now no longer binding upon Christians, his conduct, in this instance, is no example to us. This objection, however, happens to be totally inapplicable here; for it has been shewn, and, as I think, clearly, that the institution of the Sabbath was altogether independent of the law of Moses, and as it existed before that law was given from Sinai, it was not intended to perish with it. Being required, therefore, if we would be the disciples of Christ, to follow his example, it is our duty, like him, to observe the Sabbath.

- In the third place, there are several passages in the gospels, from which, in addition to his own conduct, our Lord's approbation of the Sabbath may be fairly inferred. (Matt. xii. 1—13.) When the Pharisees expressed great indignation because the disciples of Jesus had plucked the ears of corn on the Sabbath to satisfy their hunger, as a breach of the law, in his reply does he say any thing that had a tendency to exonerate his disciples from all obligation to observe the day? Certainly not, though this was a very suitable opportunity for that purpose, had he thought this proper, especially as he observed, on this occasion, "The Son of Man" (meaning himself certainly, for such was the appellation by which he usually distinguished himself) "is Lord of the Sabbath." He defended what his disciples had done merely on the ground of necessity, referring to the examples of David and their priests; and immediately passing on, he went into their synagogue, *as his custom was*, to attend the common religious services of the day, taking this opportunity to shew, by his example, how much he approved of this method of employing it. On this occasion also he healed a man that had a withered hand, but defended this deed of benevolence against the censures of his opponents merely by asking, "What man is there of you, who shall have one sheep, and it shall fall into a pit on the Sabbath-day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?" And his inference is most reasonable and just: "Wherefore it is lawful to do good," that is,

"to relieve the distressed on the Sabbath-day." His defence on both these occasions, so far from impairing the obligation to observe the Sabbath, implies his approbation of it, and serves to confirm it. On two other occasions of a similar kind, after performing miracles of healing on the Sabbath, he vindicates what he had done on the same ground alone. Is it true, then, that our Lord defended the performance of works of necessity and mercy only on this day, at the same time that he recommended the religious observance of it by his example? What are we to infer, but that he thought other works indefensible, and that he intended that his followers should observe it in the same manner? On the first of the occasions just mentioned, according to Mark ii. 27, our Lord observed, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. So that the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath." And who will dispute the position that the Sabbath was instituted for the benefit of mankind at large? Or who again will call in question the fact, that the religious improvement of the Sabbath is conducive to that benefit? And was Jesus Lord of the Sabbath? Why then did he not prohibit the observance of it if he did not think it beneficial? He did think so, and therefore his prohibition of it is withheld.

There is one passage, however, in which our Lord has given confirmation, as it appears to me at least, to the authority of the Ten Commandments; and, consequently, to the fourth among the rest, as binding upon all men. When a person, who had great possessions, (Matt. xix. 16,) came to him and said, "What good thing shall I do that I may have everlasting life?" he replies, "Keep the commandments; Thou shalt do no murder; Thou shalt not commit adultery," &c. It is true our Lord has quoted only five of these commandments; but if we say, that it is evident he intended to teach that obedience to these only is essential, then it follows, that "Thou shalt have no other gods but me; Make no graven images; Take not the name of the Lord thy God in vain; Thou shalt not steal; Honour thy father and mother," are not binding any more than "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy." It is perfectly clear, however, that when our Lord enjoins, as the condition of obtaining everlasting life, "Keep the commandments," and quotes a part of them in order that there might be no mistake as to what he refer-

red to, he meant, without doubt, the Ten Commandments, and he thereby establishes the perpetual authority of the whole of them, and consequently of the fourth, not less than the others.

But, to conclude this part of the subject, there is one other passage which, in my opinion, proves, not only that our Lord did not intend to set aside the observance of the Sabbath among his followers, but that they would continue to observe it, and this too with his entire approbation. When he was predicting the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Roman army, he says, (Matt. xxiv. 20,) "Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, nor *on the Sabbath-day*." Now these calamities were to take place, as they really did, long after the apostles had taught that the Mosaic law was not binding upon Christians. This passage, therefore, shews that our Lord knew and intended, that the observance of the Sabbath should survive the authority of that law, and, consequently, that it was altogether independent of it. Had it been his design that this observance should cease, he certainly would not have given this exhortation.

From all this I infer, therefore—first, Our Lord has not abolished the Sabbath, there being no occasion whatever for his giving a new command to observe it, as the original consecration of the day remained in full force; secondly, He recommended the religious observance of it by his example; and, thirdly, What he has said in reference to it plainly implies his entire approbation of it.

But should it be said that all this is in defence of the observance of the seventh day of the week, I reply, that whether it be the first or the seventh, as maintained in my first letter, with reasons for this opinion more at large, is not matter of the slightest importance. The object which the original institution of the Sabbath had in contemplation, provided a seventh portion of our time be devoted to religious purposes, is attained equally well on one day as another. The primitive Christians appear to have been of the same opinion: by them, indeed, both the seventh and the first seem to have been devoted to religious purposes for a considerable time, till at length the latter gained the ascendancy, on account of our Lord's resurrection from the dead. Always, however, from the first, one of them was evidently observed, and the alteration of the day would scarcely have taken place without the concurrence and authority of the apostles. But for this part of the subject,

and the examination of other passages in the New Testament, I must crave your indulgence in another letter.

THOS. MOORE.

Mr. Estlin on the Objections to Mechanics' Institutes.

MANY persons favourable to the improvement of the people entertain doubts as to the final result of Mechanics' Institutes. There is no good unaccompanied by evil; but surely no lasting injury to society can be apprehended from the growth of knowledge and the advance of civilization. This principle is so ably supported in the following passage, that we deem it right to lay it before our readers: it is the concluding address of Mr. Estlin, the respectable surgeon of Bristol, at the Mechanics' Institute of that city, after a lecture which he had the kindness to deliver on the Pressure of the Atmosphere. The audience consisted of 300 persons.

"I am unwilling to take leave of you this evening without congratulating you upon the progress which our Institution is making, and expressing my conviction that no long time will elapse before it attains the highest eminence which its most sanguine supporters have desired. It has, however, much opposition to contend with: by *opposition* I do not mean *hostility*, but the conscientious conviction of many estimable individuals that *evil* and not *good* will be the result. We must trust to time, to unprejudiced reflection, to *your good conduct*, to convince them that their fears are groundless. And it is well their objections should be removed, for there are many now opposed to us, who have only to be convinced they are mistaken, to be rendered most willing to assist us from their libraries and purses.

"It may not be amiss for you to know some of the objections raised against Mechanics' Institutions. It is said, that they will be the means of favouring *combinations*. I believe they will prove the *death-blow* to combinations, by removing all *cause* for them. It cannot be denied that every man has a right to set what value he pleases upon his *labour*: if he is *wise*, he will be *careful* not to fix a higher price than the *demand* will allow him to get. It is, however, his *commodity*, and he may ask what price for it he chooses, as justly as the merchant may for any article he sells. But it is possible that he may ask a higher price than his employer can afford to give: now it is one of the many important uses of these institutions to diffuse a general

correct knowledge of the *principles* which regulate the rate of wages, and thus to remove the most common cause of misunderstanding and discontent. The opponents of these societies will see that they are not limited to any particular *trade*; but that they consist of persons engaged in all branches of industry, and that a knowledge of the state of trade *in general* will be acquired. It will be seen in our Institution that masters and workmen join together; a union which must be the means of affording a correct idea of their mutual interests; and the promotion of a friendly feeling between them must be the inevitable consequence. The only *combination* which these institutions will give rise to, will be one in pursuit of useful and innocent information. Can it indeed be seriously believed, that a society established for the improvement of the mind, and for the purpose of enlivening the few hours of relaxation from labour, by means of a library, by occasional lectures on scientific subjects, and by private information in branches of useful knowledge, can have a tendency to favour among the labouring classes a lawless *conspiracy* (I will not call it combination) to deter their fellow-workmen by threats and intimidation from selling their labour for whatever they please, and thus endeavouring to deprive them of that liberty which is the birthright of every Englishman? The strong arm of the law is vested with full power to inflict the severest punishment upon the misguided perpetrators of these outrages: but a still more powerful engine is at work to arrest the progress of such infatuation and ignorance—*Mechanics' Institutions*.—Another objection is, that those who acquire the increase of knowledge which these societies are intended to communicate, will become dissatisfied with their station in life. It must, however, be remembered, that it is not two or three, but a large mass of individuals whose minds are thus to be improved; and the idea is almost absurd of a whole class of society wishing to leave the sphere of life in which they are placed, and to rise to a superior one. A few discontented persons (and those perhaps possessing the least solid information) may think themselves fitted for a higher condition: but they will soon find how difficult the task is of thus bettering themselves: and by seeing they are surrounded by those as intelligent as themselves, who are contented with their station, they will learn the wisdom of being satisfied with the state in which Providence has placed them. Should, however, some, with latent talents, called forth by the instruction they have received,

be enabled, by persevering industry and the honourable exercise of their genius, to rise to superior rank, they will meet with the cordial welcome of every liberal mind in the station, whatever it be, to which they may have risen; and it will be a credit to Mechanics' Institutions to have been the means of rescuing from obscurity, talents which may prove importantly serviceable to society. No great share of sense or observation is necessary to convince every man of ordinary reflection, that different *ranks* must exist in society; and that he who discharges the duties of that station in which he is placed, in a proper manner, is sure of being respected, contented and happy.

"I must not omit to mention one more objection; it is believed by some, that these institutions will lead to a *revolution* in the country (I do not wonder at your smiling). If the possession of the knowledge which they will diffuse will enable the members to live without the necessaries of life, some danger might be apprehended from the release from all useful occupation of so large a number of human beings. But while food and clothing must be obtained, habitations procured, and families provided for, that *labour* which alone can command the supply of these necessaries will never be neglected. Of a desire to produce a *change* in the condition of the working classes, the promoters of Mechanics' Institutions must plead guilty: they contemplate a *CHANGE* from *ignorance* to *information*—a *REVOLUTION* from the *ale-house* to the *library*! And while these objects are judiciously and steadily pursued, with a constant view to the best interests (as regards both this world and the next) of those for whose benefit these institutions have been established, our well-intended efforts will be smiled upon by Providence, and crowned with the amplest success."

There is another advantage practically resulting from Mechanics' Institutions, not taken notice of, for obvious reasons, by Mr. Estlin; and that is, the friendly union which it brings about between the different classes of society. The leaders in forming these societies, and indeed in supporting them, must of necessity consist partly of persons of more education and influence than the mass of the people, for whose benefit they are designed; now the co-operation of these with the humbler inquirers after knowledge appears to us to be of itself a great, an incalculable good.

Address of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

[The following circular Address, which is in course of distribution, is inserted in the *Christian Reformer* at the special request of the General Committee of the Association. The plan of the Society was given at large in our last Volume, the No. for June, pp. 192—198. Since then, the Rev. THOMAS COOPER, late of Hanley, has been appointed Under Secretary, and Mr. HORWOOD, Accomptant, Basinghall Street, Collector for both Town and Country. Rooms have also been engaged for the Association in No. 3, Walbrook Buildings, near the Mansion House, where Mr. Cooper attends on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, from the hours of 11 to 4, to give information, to receive communications, &c. All letters for the Secretaries are requested to be addressed to his care.—Any persons having the means of distributing the following Address to advantage, may be supplied with the number of copies they may want on application to him.—The readers who are well-wishers to the Association will see the necessity of instant attention to the recommendations and requests of the Circular. There may be many persons willing to subscribe to the Society, but able to do it only in small sums, to which they may not wish to have their names prefixed: these will find no difficulty in putting their donations into the hands of some common friend who may be disposed to act as Local Treasurer.—Besides the Unitarian Fund and the Unitarian Association, there is reason to expect that the UNITARIAN SOCIETY *for the distribution of Books*, the parent Unitarian Society, will unite with the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, the Committee of that Society having resolved to recommend such incorporation to the General Meeting which will be held in a few weeks.—We understand that the names and subscriptions, some very liberal, of many Unitarian District Associations and Congregations, as well as of individuals, have been already reported to the Secretary and General Committee.—Subscriptions will also be received by the Secretary, Rev. ROBERT ASPLAND; by the Foreign Secretary, Rev. W. J. Fox; by the Solicitor, Mr. EDGAR TAYLOR, Temple; by the Treasurer, JOHN CHRISTIE, Esq., Mark Lane; and by the Deputy Treasurer, Mr. THOMAS HORNBY, 31, Swithin's Lane, Lombard Street.]

Address.

THE General Committee of "The British and Foreign Unitarian Association" are desirous of giving publicity to the constitution of this Society, with which the Societies known by the names of "The Unitarian Fund" and "The Unitarian Association for the Protection of Civil Rights," are incorporated; and at the same time of explaining the objects contemplated by the founders of the new and extended Association, the mode of its organization, and the means by which resources may be obtained for carrying into effect its various plans.

The idea of a general union of Unitarians for the promotion of their common objects was suggested by the practical inconveniences experienced in conducting the business of the several distinct societies, as well as by the great expense of these separate establishments.

It is obvious that no society limited to one specific object can command the attention and confidence that are necessary for great and successful exertions; and also, that when the general exigencies of the cause are not under one view, and the resources that may be obtained are not capable of being apportioned and distributed according to the relative importance of the occasion, an income which, judiciously applied, would be all-sufficient, may prove in the event altogether ineffectual.

The managers of the several Unitarian Societies in the metropolis, had in reality felt that the time was come for altering their plans of operation, and in some respects for new modelling them; and a reform being necessary, it seemed desirable to lay at once the foundation of a broader society than had previously existed, which should comprehend the various great objects for the promotion of which Unitarians have entered into association, and constitute both a point of union and a centre of action. In conceiving the design of such an extensive and important Institution, it was, however, seen to be necessary that a choice should be left to societies and individuals as to the particular objects to which their liberality should be applied.

With these views "The British and Foreign Unitarian Association" has been established, and the exposition of them will, it is hoped and believed by the General Committee, give general satisfaction to their brethren throughout the kingdom, and secure such extended, zealous and prompt co-operation, as will form a new era in the history of our denomination.

The experience of all other religious societies in London has convinced the General Committee of the expediency of opening a public and permanent office, under the superintendence of a resident officer, as Under Secretary, upon a salary. By this arrangement, they calculate on providing the means of transacting with regularity and dispatch the multifarious business which has been hitherto committed to many separate hands; on establishing a central point of union with the Unitarian Societies in the country, of whatever description; on removing the inconvenience and confusion, so much complained of, arising from numerous officers, collectors and subscription lists; and on saving the expense of printing and the trouble of distributing so many distinct reports, which, from the nature of the case, have often related to subjects of minor importance.

While "The British and Foreign Unitarian Association" proposes to embrace all objects properly Unitarian, it is provided in its constitution that any of the Metropolitan Societies uniting with it shall, if it be so determined, preserve their distinct funds, with the usual rights and privileges of their several subscribers, and that the business of each Society, as far as it is really distinct, shall be managed by a Sub-Committee appointed out of the General Committee: the same objects will therefore continue to be pursued, but with the advantage of unity and simplicity in the management, so essential in some cases to promptitude, and in all cases to effectiveness.

Hitherto, "The Unitarian Fund" and "The Unitarian Association for protecting Civil Rights," are the only societies that have formally united themselves with "The British and Foreign Unitarian Association." Whether either of the Book Societies will enter into the Union is at present uncertain; should they retain their individuality, the present "Association" may possibly establish such communications with them as may be mutually useful; but in either case it is contemplated that the "Association" shall have a book department of its own, with regard to which it appears to the General Committee that there is abundant scope for serviceable exertion. The plan of this department is not yet matured, the General Committee being anxious, before they finally determine upon it, to receive the friendly suggestions of their brethren throughout the country, many of whom have long expressed their approbation of the general principle on which it is to be formed. They deprecate the thought of hostility to any

existing institution; but it may be allowed them to remark, in the fair spirit of benevolent competition, that it can scarcely be considered for any long time that the real objects of any one of the Societies can be essentially promoted by preserving a cumbrous and expensive apparatus for the issuing annually of a few publications, which might proceed as well in every respect from the office of the Association, with little or no additional expense or trouble. In any event, the General Committee are persuaded that in this part of its administration the Association will be of important service to the Unitarian interest, if it do no more than act as a general medium of communication in relation to our tracts and other publications, and furnish a convenient mode of procuring them from the scattered sources whence they issue, and of distributing them wherever they may be called for by societies or individuals.

It is humbly conceived by the General Committee that "The British and Foreign Unitarian Association" may be the means of bringing into affiliation and co-operation the several Societies existing in different districts, as well as *Congregations* and *Individuals*, and of thus constituting that union and concentration of power and exertion which has long been desired by the more influential and active members of the Unitarian body.

I. Societies, whether Book Societies or existing under any other denomination.

These may be already in action or may be formed hereafter.

Over these the Association meditates no controul, nor any interference with their funds or their independence. All that is proposed is, that wherever an Unitarian Society (whether County or District, or whatever be its local denomination) exists, it should connect itself with the Association, (on the supposition of approval of the general plan,) by making some stated contribution out of its funds, and by directing its officers to correspond regularly with the General Committee. There would thus be opened a ready channel of information, and the way would be prepared for co-operation on any emergency affecting the common cause. In return, the associated Societies would gain all the facilities for their various objects which the central establishment in the metropolis will naturally afford, and would be entitled to send each two representatives to the General Annual Meetings, who would also in that character stand on the same footing as the members

of the General Committee. It is taken for granted that the annual contribution of such Societies would be in proportion to their means : the lowest sum that is provided by the Rules as the qualification of membership is 5*l.* per annum.

II. Independent Congregations. The union of these with the Association is considered by the General Committee as of the first importance. This union may be effected by means of Fellowship Funds or of special meetings of the Congregations for this express object. Some congregations may, it is true, form members of County or District Societies connected with the Association : but it is submitted that the resources of the union and the means of useful co-operation will be very restricted, unless all the principal congregations of the denomination unite themselves under the general plan and be directly known to, and, as occasion serves, in intimate correspondence with, the General Committee, and thereby become acquainted with one another. Associated congregations would be entitled to send instructions by two representatives to the General Meetings, and also to give their opinion and advice by correspondence on any questions affecting the general interests ; and in case of need, would receive all the advice, assistance and support which the general body in its different departments is able to supply. There are few of our congregations, it is presumed, which would feel any difficulty in making an annual contribution far exceeding the amount (3*l.*) prescribed by the Rules ; but should the difficulty be felt in a single instance, it is met by the provision that each congregation shall have the option of subscribing not less than the annual stated contribution, or of making a public collection once in three years, with the *bonâ fide* produce of which (where the other more desirable mode of contribution would be inconvenient) the Association would be satisfied.

III. Individuals. To these, who have been almost the entire support of Unitarian Societies hitherto, the General Committee look with confidence as their main dependence. Great is the number of those who are both able and willing to contribute to our common cause, and especially in the country and the larger towns, who have never yet been placed in a condition, with regard to information and connexion, of fulfilling their own wishes. The General Committee have reason to believe that there are thousands who wait only for the call, to make their contributions to

objects which, as professed Unitarians and as Unitarian worshippers, they feel themselves pledged to promote. They have indeed no apprehension that an individual of their body will be found who will not cheerfully make some annual allowance, according to his ability, to an Association which will have perpetually in its view all the various modes by which the common cause of truth and righteousness can possibly be served. It is by individual efforts that other religious denominations are able to serve their respective interests so effectually, and it would be a reflection upon the Unitarians to admit for a moment the apprehension that they will fall below those in point of liberality above whom they justly conceive themselves to stand in a knowledge of the true meaning of the records of salvation. The General Committee confidently reckon upon a large accession of individual subscribers to the Association by means of its ramifications in Congregations and District and County Societies, throughout all which it is hoped that from the first an interest will be excited in the proceedings of the Association, as it is believed that that interest will be kept up and increased by the reports that shall from time to time be made of its exertions. It is too plain to need stating, that a small annual contribution from the numerous Unitarians throughout the kingdom, to whom such a contribution could be a matter only of trifling consideration, would place the Association on a scale of respectability and influence far beyond any thing yet known amongst us. And if our cause be the cause of Revealed Truth, of Divine Benevolence and Human Happiness, why should not each of us be eager to do his part in favour of pure and undefiled religion before God even, the Father—were it only to wipe away the reproach, that Superstition has been able to excite a warmer zeal and more energetic labours on its behalf, than have yet been seen amongst the friends and upholders of that pure Christianity which professes both to inspire and cherish “the spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind”?

The General Committee, whose names are set down in the sheet of Rules that accompanies this Circular,* trust that they are too well known to their brethren to allow of any wrong interpretation being put upon this Address. The plan submitted to the Unitarian public is the result of

* See *Christian Reformer*, XI. 192—198.

many years' experience. There is no wish to dictate or even to instruct. The leading members of the Association state their views because they believe them to be practicable and conformable to the actual state of the denomination ; and they leave the subject to the consideration of Societies, Congregations and Individuals, persuaded that this appeal will be regarded at least with candour, and not without expectation that they shall receive such answers as will put the existence of the Association beyond all doubt, and place the Unitarian body in a more commanding attitude than it has yet been able to assume.

In order to ascertain the degree of support on which the General Committee can rely, by which, of course, their various proceedings will be determined and regulated, it is in the highest degree desirable that they should receive early instructions on the following points :

1. How many of the District or County Societies are disposed to unite with them, and to what extent they are prepared to offer pecuniary assistance.

2. What Congregations are willing to join the Association as distinct members. Many Congregations were connected with "The Unitarian Association for the Protection of Civil Rights," which is now dissolved in "The British and Foreign Unitarian Association," and it is not doubted that these will also join the existing and more comprehensive Society : but they are specially requested to make an early communication of their intentions in this respect, and of the amount or mode of their respective contributions.

3. With regard to Individual Subscribers, many of whom have been members of several of the societies in the metropolis, it is of importance to the General Committee to be informed at an early period whether they consider themselves subscribers to the new Association, and to what amount. The General Committee are desirous that individuals should consider themselves entitled by the plan of the Association to apply and apportion their subscriptions among the objects of the Society, *ad libitum* ; but at the same time they trust they shall be excused for recommending, to such as may have no strong feeling or decided inclination upon the question, a general subscription in preference to an appropriated one, in order to leave those persons whom the Association shall from year to year entrust with the administration of its funds, in the full

exercise of one of the great advantages contemplated in the formation of this new and extended Institution, viz. the power of applying the resources of the Society to such objects as shall at any one time appear to them to stand in need of peculiar support : each of the objects pursued by the Association will probably be benefited in turn by this discretionary power.

Several District and County Societies, some congregations, and many individuals, have already enrolled themselves amongst the subscribers or contributors, a list of whom will be published as soon as time shall have been allowed for answers to this Circular.

In the answers which the General Committee beg earnestly to solicit, it is requested that individuals will favour them with their names and addresses in full ; that congregations will give the names and addresses of their ministers and representatives ; and that District and County Societies will communicate the names and addresses of their representatives and officers.

Ministers and other gentlemen who are willing to assist the Association in the country and in large towns by their correspondence, *by receiving subscriptions as Local Treasurers*, and by distributing communications, are earnestly requested to signify the same to the General Committee, and also to furnish any useful information with regard to the promotion of the objects of the Association in their respective neighbourhoods.

The General Committee have the pleasure of announcing that the Rev. Dr. CARPENTER, of Bristol, has kindly undertaken to preach the First Association Sermon, on the Evening of Wednesday in the Whitsun Week, May 17, and the Rev. JAMES TAYLER, of Nottingham, to preach the Second Sermon on the next morning, Thursday, May 18, 1826. Further and ample particulars of the Annual Meeting, and of all the proceedings of the Association, will be laid before the public soon, and from time to time ; it being the purpose of the General Committee to establish frequent communications between themselves and the subscribers and friends to the Society.

Signed on behalf of the General Committee,

ROBERT ASPLAND, Secretary.

Rizpah : a Poetical Paraphrase.

[From the United States' Literary Gazette.]

“ And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill before the Lord ; and they fell all seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first days, in the beginning of barley harvest. And Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until the water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.” 2 Sam. xxi. 9, 10.

HEAR what the desolate Rizpah said,
As on Gibeah's rocks she watched the dead.
The sons of Michel before her lay,
And her own fair children, dearer than they ;
By a death of shame they all had died,
And were stretched on the bare rock, side by side.
And Rizpah, once the loveliest of all
That bloomed and smiled in the court of Saul,
All wasted with watching and famine now,
And scorched by the sun her haggard brow,
Sat mournfully guarding their corpses there,
And murmured a strange and solemn air ;
The low, heart-broken, and wailing strain
Of a mother that mourns her children slain :

I have made the crags my home, and spread
On their desert backs my sackcloth bed :
I have eaten the bitter herb of the rocks,
And drank the midnight dew in my locks ;
I have wept till I could not weep, and the pain
Of my burning eyeballs went to my brain.
Seven blackened corpses before me lie,
In the blaze of the sun and the winds of the sky.
I have watched them through the burning day,
And driven the vulture and raven away ;
And the cormorant wheeled in circles round,
Yet feared to alight on the guarded ground.
And when the shadows of twilight came,
I have seen the hyena's eyes of flame,
And heard at my side his stealthy tread,
But aye at my shout the savage fled ;
And I threw the lighted brand, to fright
The jackal and wolf that yelled in the night.

Ye were foully murdered, my hapless sons,
By the hands of wicked and cruel ones ;
Ye fell, in your fresh and blooming prime,
All innocent, for your father's crime.
He sinned—but he paid the price of his guilt
When his blood by a nameless hand was spilt ;
When he strove with the heathen host in vain,
And fell with the flower of his people slain,
And the sceptre his children's hands should sway,
From his injured lineage passed away.

But I hoped that the cottage roof would be
A safe retreat for my sons and me ;
And that while they ripened to manhood fast,
They should wean my thoughts from the woes of the past.
And my bosom swelled with a mother's pride,
As they stood in their beauty and strength by my side,
Tall like their sire, with the princely grace
Of his stately form and the bloom of his face.

Oh, what an hour for a mother's heart,
When the pitiless ruffians tore us apart !
When I clasped their knees and wept and prayed,
And struggled and shrieked to Heaven for aid,
And clung to my sons with desperate strength,
Till the murderers loosed my hold at length,
And bore me breathless and faint aside,
In their iron arms while my children died.
They died—and the mother that gave them birth
Is forbid to cover their bones with earth.

The barley harvest was nodding white,
When my children died on the rocky height,
And the reapers were singing on hill and plain,
When I came to my task of sorrow and pain.
But now the season of rain is nigh,
The sun is dim in the thickening sky,
And the clouds in sullen darkness rest,
When he hides his light at the doors of the west ;
I hear the howl of the wind that brings
The long drear storm on its heavy wings ;
But the howling wind, and the driving rain
Will beat on my houseless head in vain :
I shall stay, from my murdered sons to scare
The beasts of the desert, and fowls of the air.

Bryant

Hebrew Tales.

THIS is the title of a pleasing little volume just published by Hyman Hurwitz, a learned Jew. The tales have been selected from the writings of the ancient Hebrews, who flourished in the five first centuries after the destruction of Jerusalem, and are known to the learned by the names of the *Talmud*, &c. There is an Essay prefixed "on the uninspired Literature of the Hebrews." We can recommend the volume to our readers, especially the younger part of them. The following extracts will shew the nature of the work:

The Value of a Good Wife.

He that hath found a virtuous wife, hath a greater treasure than costly pearls.

Such a treasure had the celebrated teacher RABBI MEIR found. He sat during the whole of one Sabbath-day in the public school and instructed the people. During his absence from his house his two sons, both of them of uncommon beauty and enlightened in the law, died. His wife bore them to her bed-chamber, laid them upon the marriage-bed, and spread a white covering over their bodies. Towards evening Rabbi Meir came home. "Where are my beloved sons," he asked, "that I may give them my blessing?" "They are gone to the school," was the answer. "I repeatedly looked round the school," he replied, "and I did not see them there." She reached him a goblet; he praised the Lord at the going out of the Sabbath, drank, and again asked, "Where are my sons, that they may drink of the cup of blessing?" "They will not be far off," she said, and placed food before him, that he might eat. He was in a gladsome and genial mood, and when he had said grace after the meal, she thus addressed him:—"Rabbi, with thy permission I would fain propose to thee one question." "Ask it, then, my love!" he replied. "A few days ago a person entrusted some jewels to my custody, and now he demands them again: should I give them back again?" "This is a question," said Rabbi Meir, "which my wife should not have thought it necessary to ask. What! wouldest thou hesitate or be reluctant to restore to every one his own?" "No," she replied, "but yet I thought it best not to restore them without acquainting thee therewith." She then led him to their

chamber, and, stepping to the bed, took the white covering from their bodies. "Ah, my sons! my sons!" thus loudly lamented the father: "My sons! the light of mine eyes, and the light of my understanding; I was your father, but ye were my teachers in the law!" The mother turned away and wept bitterly. At length she took her husband by the hand and said, "Rabbi, didst thou not teach me that we must not be reluctant to restore that which was entrusted to our keeping? See, the Lord gave, the Lord has taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord!" "Blessed be the name of the Lord!" echoed Rabbi Meir, "and blessed be his name for thy sake too! for well is it written, 'He that has found a virtuous woman has a greater treasure than costly pearls. She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the instruction of kindness.'" *Gmofya*

Conversation of a Philosopher with a Rabbi.

"Your God in his Book calls himself a jealous God, who can endure no other God beside himself, and on all occasions makes manifest his abhorrence of idolatry. How comes it then that he threatens and seems to hate the worshipers of false gods more than the false gods themselves?" "A certain king," replied the Rabbi, "had a disobedient son. Among other worthless tricks of various kinds, he had the baseness to give to his dogs his father's name and titles. Should the king shew his anger on the prince or the dogs?" "Well turned," replied the Philosopher: "but if your God destroyed the objects of idolatry, he would take away the temptation to it." "Yea," retorted the Rabbi, "if the fools worshiped such things only as were of no further use than that to which their folly applied them,—if the idols were always as worthless as the idolatry is contemptible. But they worship the sun, the moon, the host of heaven, the rivers, the sea, fire, air, and what not. Would you that the Creator, for the sake of these fools, should ruin his own works, and disturb the laws appointed to nature by his own wisdom? If a man steals grain and sows it, should the seed not shoot up out of the earth because it was stolen? O, no! the wise Creator lets nature run her own course; for her course is his own appointment. And what if the children of folly abuse it to evil? The day of reckoning is not far off, and men will then learn that human actions likewise re-appear

in their consequences by as certain a law as the green blade rises up out of the buried corn-seed."

Mercy in Judgment.—A Parable of Rabbi Jo-cho-nan.

Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth.—PROV. xxiv.

RABBI JOCHONAN relates, that whilst the Egyptians were drowning in the Red Sea, the angels wished to chaunt the song of praise; but God rebuked them, saying, "What! the works of my hand are perishing, and ye wish to sing!"

This fully agrees with the character of God, as given in various parts of scripture; where he is represented as the God of mercy, who wishes not the destruction of the wicked, but their repentance. When, therefore, the wickedness of men calls down just punishment upon their guilty heads, it ought to serve as a warning, but not as matter of joy.

To insult Poverty or natural Defect, no venial Crime.

Whosoever mocketh the poor, reproacheth his Maker.—PROV. xvii. 4.

Despise not the poor; thou knowest not how soon it may be thine own lot.

Despise not the deformed; their defects are not of their own seeking, and why shouldest thou add insult to misfortune?

Despise no creature; the most insignificant is the work of thy Maker.

RABBI ELIEZER returning from his master's residence to his native place, was highly elated with the great knowledge he had acquired. On his way he overtook a singularly unshapely and misfeatured person, who was travelling to the same town. The stranger saluted him by saying—"Peace be upon thee, Rabbi." Eliezer, proud of his learning, instead of returning the civility, noticed only the Traveller's deformity; and by way of joke, said to him,—"Racca,* are the inhabitants of thy town all as misshapen as thou art?" The stranger, astonished at Eliezer's want of manners, and provoked by the insult, replied, "I do not know: but thou hadst better make these inquiries of the great Artist that made me." The Rabbi perceived his error, and alighting from the animal on which he rode,

* A term of reproach.

threw himself at the stranger's feet, and entreated him to pardon a fault committed in the wantonness of his heart, and which he most sincerely regretted. "No," said the stranger, "*go first to the Artist that made me, and tell him, Great Artist, O! what an ugly vessel hast thou produced!*" Eliezer continued his entreaties: the stranger persisted in his refusal. In the mean time they arrived at the Rabbi's native city. The inhabitants being apprised of his arrival, came in crowds to meet him, exclaiming, "Peace be upon thee, Rabbi! Welcome our Instructor!" "Whom do ye call Rabbi?" asked the stranger. The people pointed to Eliezer. "And him ye honour with the name of Rabbi!" continued the poor man: "O! may Israel not produce many like him!" He then related what had happened. "He has done wrong; he is aware of it," said the people; "do forgive him; for he is a great man, well versed in the law." The stranger then forgave him, and intimated that his long refusal had no other object than that of impressing the impropriety on the Rabbi's mind. The learned Eliezer thanked him; and whilst he held out his own conduct as a warning to the people, he justified that of the stranger, by saying—that though a person ought ever to be as flexible as a reed, and not as stubborn as a cedar, yet to insult poverty or natural defect is no venial crime, and one that we cannot expect to be readily pardoned.

On the Unchangeable Love of God.

No. I.

SIR,

I HAVE been frequently led to reflect upon this subject, both by its importance and delightful tendency, and the mistaken notion respecting it, and erroneous and mischievous inferences deduced from it, by a large portion of professing Christians. God is love, and he is unchangeably so. God loved the creatures which he formed, and therefore he must always love them. For if he loved them at their formation and should afterwards cease to do so, (his affection being altered by any circumstance,) how can he be unchangeable in his love? Most certainly, upon the principles of the Predestinarians, of every shade, as no unforeseen circumstance could arise to the eye of omniscience, there never could be any reason for any affection, either of

love or of dislike, which did not at the first exist in the mind of God. To attempt any proof of this proposition would be a waste of time both to the writer and the reader, to the speaker and the hearer. Our attention is then turned to consequences; and the first deduction of this fact is diametrically opposed to the first principle of Calvinism, as much so as Calvinism is opposed to Arminianism, and for the same reason. For if God loved all his creatures at their creation, and afterwards changed from love to hatred towards the whole, or any part; or did he cease to bear to any part the same affection which he did at the first, then the same consequence would follow which the Calvinist so loudly reprobates as Arminian heresy. Can any thing but complete partiality in reason lead to any other conclusion, or even any reason be shewn why God should not love the whole of his creatures at the first, with the same intenseness of affection with which he afterwards loved only a part, called by Calvinists the elect? I have no doubt if the Calvinists could accomplish their favourite scheme of annihilating reason, this or any other thing might be said and pass for truth and inspiration; but so long as the mind possesses the faculty, exercises the gift, and vindicates the rights of reason, so long must it infer the same conclusion from the same premises, and similar conclusions from similar premises; and so long, therefore, as it is unperverted, must it conclude, that if God be unchangeable in his love, he must continue to love his creatures with the same affection that he did at the first. And if God loved all at the first, he still loves all; and if at the first he loved only a part of mankind, and rejected the rest, or decreed them to sin and misery, then he rejected these without any demerit on their part, as no demerit can attach itself to nonentity. I shall leave it to any unperverted mind to make its consequences from this fact, and pass on to another reflection arising out of this subject, which I deem of no small importance. According to the Calvinistic idea of the unchangeable love of God, that pure and holy Being is represented as choosing and loving a portion of mankind, not because they are more holy than the rest, (and, surely, not because they are more unholy than the rest, though one would be led to suppose this from the general tone of Calvinists, either preachers or writers,) but certainly because it was his pleasure to do so; and, therefore, it was neither their merit nor demerit, their hap-

piness nor their misery, that was either the principal or auxiliary cause of this election. Consequently, no subsequent condition, either moral or natural, accidental or designed, can alter this love, either by making it more intense or more languid. And here, I apprehend, we shall have a cloud of the most pernicious inferences from these premises. We shall see the righteous standing in the back ground, cast down with despair, because God rejects them, and either refuses to espouse the cause of truth, or directly frowns upon it, and bestows his smiles and crowns upon the wicked of every hue; while the wicked stand on an immoveable eminence, and rejoice with furious exultation, because the love of God overlooks the principles of the heart and attaches itself to the mere lump of flesh, or the ethereal spirit that gives it animation. Thus the nerves of virtue are unstrung, while the sinews of vice increase their power with a ten-fold ratio. Can any thing be more appalling than to see vice triumphant and virtue depressed? 'Tis true we see this to be the case frequently in this world; but every believer in Jesus Christ feels no anxiety on that account, because he looks beyond the present transitory scene of probation, and expects, with the certainty of faith, to see this picture reversed at the day of judgment. He sees with the eye of faith, guided by the oracles of God, the good oppressed emerging from their dungeons, hiding-places and obscure corners, to be exhibited in the face of day, with the shout of angels, the applause of heaven, and the smiles of their Judge and their God, who will salute them with a *Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!* while the wicked shall call upon the rocks and mountains to hide them from the presence of Him that sitteth on the throne, but who will both see them and expose them, and sentence them to woe and misery, tribulation and anguish. But if this radical principle of Calvinism be true, viz. that unchangeable love attaches itself to the mere creature, animal or spiritual, instead of the principles by which that creature is governed, all the expectations of faith are false, and delusive are the hopes which the word of God inspires, and permanent is the triumph of vice over virtue, and God abandons the cause of righteousness to espouse that of mere selfish feelings, and to gratify the unreasonable wishes of vanity and vice. I judge that no one can obviate these conclusions without shaking off Calvinism

proper, and I am sure no one can hold them and defend them without annihilating the plain testimony of scripture. We are then inevitably brought into this dilemma, either to suppose that God is unchangeably attached to the cause of righteousness, that he loves righteousness, and, consequently, those who act righteously, and that he opposes the cause of iniquity, and therefore his face is against all that do iniquity; or to believe him indifferent to principles, or opposed to good ones, but unchangeably attached to some particular individuals. The former of these suppositions establishes the rectitude, benevolence and unvariableness of God, illustrates the sense of the word of God, and establishes the fairest hopes of piety; while the latter frowns righteousness out of countenance, and causes piety to blush for its best affections and hope to tremble upon the firm foundation of the word of God.

Should the love of the ever-blessed God be imagined greater towards man than towards principles of conduct; because these are the means of completing man's happiness, (and the means cannot be of more importance than the end, nor of so much,) yet it will follow, that the opposition of God to iniquity must be greater than his dislike to man, or any part of mankind, because iniquity alone renders man an object of disapprobation to the Divine Mind.

But I must conclude my present letter, proposing to extend my reflections and lay them before the readers of the Reformer in another, should they meet your approbation.

J. C.

Commencement of Unitarian Christianity in Calcutta.

[From "The Unitarian Repository and Christian Miscellany" for Nov. 1823, No. 2, printed at Calcutta.]

IN our last Number we gave an extract from a letter containing an account of the spontaneous growth of Unitarian Christianity among the natives at *Madras*, and of its gradual progress from the year 1795 to the present period, through the persevering exertions of a single individual, comparatively illiterate and almost entirely unaided. The following letter, which we received some time ago, furnishes an account of a similar attempt, made so early as the year 1803, to form a Unitarian Society amongst Europeans and their descendants in *Calcutta*. The endeavours of Mr. Walter were unsuccessful. But no

effort in the cause of truth and virtue is entirely lost. The seeds which were *then* sown are *now* found springing up on every side, and the fruit thus produced will, we doubt not, when it arrives at maturity, prove both abundant in quantity and excellent in kind. The *causes* of Mr. Walter's immediate failure, however, deserve to be fully weighed by Unitarian Christians of the present day, and by all who are friendly to the principles of Unitarian Christianity. We have only further to add, that we lately had an opportunity of conversing with Mr. Walter's widow, who was then about to proceed to Bombay; that the Calcutta Unitarian Committee purchased from her all the books remaining in her possession that had belonged to her late husband; and that from the information which she communicated it appeared that Mr. Walter had carried on a correspondence with some one of the principal English Unitarians, Dr. Priestley, Mr. Lindsey, or Mr. Belsbam, but that none of the letters which had been received were to be found among his papers.

"I have been favoured with your note dated the 7th instant, and have much pleasure in communicating to you, in compliance with your request, such information on the subject of your inquiry as memory enables me to supply, regretting that my absence from Calcutta at the period when the late Mr. W. Greene Walter was first led to a serious consideration of the popular doctrine of the Trinity, necessarily obliges me to pass over an interesting passage in his life, and to confine myself to a brief notice of the unsuccessful attempt made by him to form a society of Christians on the Unitarian system, and to such particulars connected with that event as fell under my personal observation.

"On my return to this Presidency from Prince of Wales' Island in 1803, I was invited by Mr. Walter, with whom I had been previously acquainted, to a weekly meeting held at his house for the purpose of reading the Holy Scriptures, the object of which was to discover how far the doctrine maintained by the Established Church of England respecting the *person* of Christ was borne out by the general tenor and evidence of the gospel history, particularly with reference to the declarations of Christ himself, and the general scope of the precepts taught by him, as well as to the conduct of his disciples after his ascension. On a subject of such importance to mankind, and on which such a diversity

of opinions has been entertained by men eminent for learning, piety and candour in every age, it would have been deemed the height of presumption in a few obscure and comparatively illiterate individuals, however well disposed and sincere in the object of their research, to have attempted to arrive at any satisfactory or decisive conclusion, without having recourse to such helps as were within reach to assist their judgments. Grotius, Clarke, Watts, Doddridge, Wakefield, Priestley, Lindsey, Enfield, &c. &c., were frequently consulted, with a sincere determination on the part of the inquirers to give way to conviction on which side soever it might declare itself. The result confirmed Mr. Walter and a few others in the belief that the doctrine of the proper divinity of Christ was inconsistent with the accounts of his life and the general tenor of the doctrines taught by him, as recorded in the New Testament—that it was not necessary to salvation—that the more the Scriptures were made their own interpreter, the more would the fact of his simple humanity be apparent—and that he was consequently not the true God, but a being subordinate to God, to whom he himself on various occasions had solemnly and in the most unequivocal manner acknowledged his inferiority. These positions appearing to be incontrovertible, Mr. Walter felt himself called upon, as a man and a Christian, to abjure the faith in which he had been brought up, and unhesitatingly embraced the creed of the Unitarians, professing their tenets to the latest period of his existence. He endeavoured to establish a Unitarian Society, and succeeded so far as to be joined by a few who had the same object at heart. They repaired on Sundays to a place selected for their meetings, where prayers were read according to the form laid down in the Book of Common Prayer, as revised by the Rev. Mr. Belsham, concluding with a hymn and a sermon. The number of persons who assembled on these occasions never amounted to more than seven or eight. A far greater number, however, among Mr. Walter's friends and acquaintance did not hesitate to avow their conviction of the fallacy of the received doctrine of the Trinity; but, restrained by the fear of being branded with the appellation of Socinians, by which Mr. Walter and the few who attended his meetings had already been designated, or destitute of that firmness which should characterize those who advocate the cause of truth against long

established and deep-rooted prejudices, they forbore taking any active part in the exertions of Mr. Walter. The meetings continued to take place, though not regularly, during the space of nearly a twelvemonth, but declined afterwards; the few that attended dispersing one by one, owing probably to their not having obtained any additional members to their society, till at length Mr. Walter was compelled from the mere want of cordial support, to dissolve the connexion, contenting himself with offering his adorations where only he conceived they were due, according to the best lights which his reason afforded him, and the declaration of Christ immediately before his ascension, 'I go to your Father and my Father, to your God and my God.'

"T. 8.

"*The 9th of December, 1822.*"

Mr. Belsham's Dissertation on Paul's Epistles.

THE instructive and useful Dissertation prefixed to Mr. Belsham's Translation of the Epistles of Paul, has been just reprinted in a pamphlet, with permission of the author, by the Southern Unitarian Society.* The notes are inserted at the end. Whatever may be thought by any reader of any particular exposition of scripture in Mr. Belsham's Epistles of Paul, all must acknowledge the value of his general view of them, here republished. We recommend the circulation of the pamphlet, and we venture to suggest that it would be in the highest degree serviceable to the cause of Christian truth and piety to republish in the same manner Mr. Locke's "Essay for the understanding St. Paul's Epistles by consulting St. Paul himself," which stands in the front of his admirable work, which led the way in modern times to a rational exposition of the Apostles. Names influence such as cannot be swayed by argument, and many, both "orthodox" believers and unbelievers, who would reject at once simple Christianity for its own sake, may be brought to look at it with respect when it is recommended under the authority of so great a philosopher and patriot as Locke.

* 12ms. Hunter, St. Paul's Churchyard. 6d.

Milton's Treatise of Christian Doctrine.

SIR,

Clapton, February 22, 1826.

I PROPOSED (p. 29) soon to return to the *Treatise on Christian Doctrine*, and especially to that part of his fifth chapter where Milton proceeds to shew, from the plain testimony of scripture, how "the Son teaches that the attributes of divinity belong to the Father alone, to the exclusion even of himself." Nor could our author fail to remark that eminent instance of this exclusion, "with regard to omniscience, *Matt. xxiv. 36, Of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels of heaven; but my Father only:* and still more explicitly, *Mark xiii. 32, Not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.*" Here I cannot help recollecting how such a critic and commentator as Doddridge was embarrassed by this solemn declaration of Christ, while he thus attempts to accommodate our Lord's plain language to the mystic creed of an orthodox church: "Nor even the Son of Man himself, with respect to his human nature, or as a part of what he is commissioned to reveal." Thus, as Wakefield (on *Matthew*, p. 344) justly remarks, "The Trinitarian steps in with his distinctions and reservations, and tells us that, as *God*, Jesus *knew all things*, and, as *man*, was ignorant of some things; that is, was *all-wise* and *ignorant* at the same time; *God* and not *man*—*man* and not *God*, just as the argument requires and difficulties press."

Milton, as quoted by Dr. Sumner, had in *Par. Lost*, (x. 68,) ascribed to the Messiah the following devotional expressions on the Almighty's supreme dominion:

Father Eternal, thine is to decree;
Mine, both in heav'n and earth, to do thy will
Supreme.

In illustration of this subject, and to shew that our Lord excluded himself from this "supreme dominion" not merely, as his language has been "commonly interpreted," in his "mediatorial capacity," Milton thus comments (p. 101) on the interesting story (*Matt. xx.*) when "the mother of Zebedee's children" presents them, with a hope of favour, to the great prophet of Nazareth:

"Questionless, when the ambition of the mother and her two sons incited them to prefer this important petition, they addressed their petition to the entire nature of Christ, how exalted soever it might be, praying him to grant their

request to the utmost extent of his power, whether as God or man; ver. 20, *Worshipping him and desiring a certain thing of him*; and ver. 21, *Grant that they may sit*. Christ also answers in reference to his whole nature, *It is not mine to give*; and lest for some reason they might still fancy the gift belonged to him, he declares that it was altogether out of his province, and the exclusive privilege of the Father. If his reply was meant solely to refer to his mediatorial capacity, it would have bordered on sophistry, which God forbid that we should attribute to him; as if he were capable of evading the request of Salome and her sons by the quibble which the logicians call *expositio prava* or *equivoca*, when the respondent answers in a sense, or with a mental intention, different from the meaning of the questioner."

As to "whatever Christ says of himself," to suppose, according to the common resource of *orthodoxy*, that he does not speak "with reference to the whole of his character, and in his entire person, except where he himself makes a distinction," is, in Milton's opinion, to "strip the discourses and answers of Christ of all their sincerity;" to "represent every thing as ambiguous and uncertain, as true and false at the same time;" for thus "it is not Christ that speaks, but some unknown substitute, sometimes one, and sometimes another." After quoting our Lord's devotional language, as recorded *Matt. xxvi. 42, 53, Mark xiv. 36, Luke xxii. 29, John xii. 27*, he adds, "If these prayers were uttered in his human capacity, which is the common solution, why does he petition these things from the Father alone, instead of from himself, if he were God? Or rather, supposing him to be at once man and the supreme God, why does he ask at all for what was in his own power? What need was there for the union of the divine and human nature in one person, if he himself, being equal to the Father, gave back again into his hands every thing that he had received from him?" On our Lord's conversation with "the young man," (*Matt. xix. 17*), he remarks, that "it is evident that Christ did not choose to be considered essentially the same with that one God; for otherwise this would only have been disclaiming the credit of goodness in one character, for the purpose of assuming it in another."

Milton, having shewn how "Christ assigns every attribute of the Deity to the Father alone," goes on to quote a number of passages from the Epistles which prove that

"the apostles uniformly speak in a similar manner," ascribing to God the Father "even those works which regard the Son himself, or which were done in him," especially in reference to our Lord's resurrection. On those "many texts wherein the Son is said to be raised up by the Father alone," Milton remarks, that "these ought to have greater weight than the single passage in *St. John*, (ii. 19,) *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up*, where he spake briefly and enigmatically, without explaining his meaning to enemies who were unworthy of a fuller answer, on which account he thought it unnecessary to mention the power of the Father."

He proceeds to remark (p. 105) "with regard to divine honours," that "as the Son uniformly pays worship and reverence to the Father alone, so he teaches us to follow the same practice." This opinion he sustains by quoting at length those numerous passages of the New Testament which have been justly and generally adduced by Unitarians as most satisfactory authorities for their worship. We have here brought to our recollection, not only the precepts of Christ on the subject of devotion, but also the doctrine and examples of those whom he "led into all truth." On *2 Tim. i. 3*, *I thank God, whom I serve with my forefathers*, it is well observed, and even learned Trinitarians (as remarked, *XL. 389*) have unequivocally admitted, that "the forefathers of Paul served God the Father alone."

In Milton's age, however, as in our day, it was "strenuously urged on the other hand, that the Son is sometimes called God, and even Jehovah; and that all the attributes of the Deity are assigned to him likewise in many passages both of the Old and New Testament." In reply, our author considers it as "already shewn, from the analogy of scripture, that where the Father and the Son are mentioned together, the name and attributes and works of the Deity, as well as divine honours, are always assigned to the one and only God the Father." He therefore proceeds to "demonstrate, that whenever the same properties are assigned to the Son, it is in such a manner as to make it easily intelligible that they ought all, primarily and properly, to be attributed to the Father alone."

In support of this opinion, Milton represents "the name of God" as "not unfrequently ascribed" to creatures, of various ranks, from "the only-begotten Son, the image

of the Father,² to judges or other human dignitaries. I had occasion (p. 32) to anticipate his conclusions, drawn from a large enumeration of texts, chiefly found in the Jewish Scriptures. On the divine appearances there recorded, he remarks, "that, whoever was heard or seen, it was not God; not even where mention is made of God; nay, even of Jehovah himself, and of the angels in the same sentence." The following paragraphs (pp. 111—113) on three texts whose *sound*, at least, has been deemed most disparaging to the Unitarian doctrine, I beg leave to quote *verbatim*, as peculiarly gratifying to any of your readers who have not met with the Treatise itself:

"Even the principal texts themselves which are brought forward to prove the divinity of the Son, if carefully weighed and considered, are sufficient to shew that the Son is God in the same manner which has been explained. *John* i. 1, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* It is not said, from everlasting, but *in the beginning.* *The Word*, therefore the Word was audible. But God, as he cannot be seen, so neither can he be heard; *John* v. 37. The Word, therefore, is not of the same essence with God. *The Word was with God, and was God*, namely, because he was with God, that is, in the bosom of the Father, as it is expressed ver. 18. Does it follow, therefore, that he is essentially one with him with whom he was? It no more follows, than that the disciple *who was lying on Jesus' breast*, *John* xiii. 23, was essentially one with Christ. Reason rejects the doctrine, Scripture no where asserts it; let us, therefore, abandon human devices, and follow the evangelist himself, who is his own interpreter. *Rev.* xix. 13, *His name is called the Word of God*, that is, of the one God; he himself is a distinct person. If, therefore, he be a distinct person, he is distinct from God, who is unity (*a Deo, eoque uno*). How then is he himself also God? By the same right as he enjoys the title of the Word, or of the only-begotten Son, namely, by the will of the one God. This seems to be the reason why it is repeated in the second verse, *the same was in the beginning with God*, which enforces what the apostle wished we should principally observe, not that he was in the beginning God, but in the beginning with God; that he might shew him to be God only by proximity and love, not in essence; which doctrine is con-

sistent with the subsequent explanations of the evangelist in numberless passages of his gospel.

“Another passage is the speech of Thomas, *John* xx. 28, *My Lord and my God*. He must have an immoderate share of credulity who attempts to elicit a new confession of faith, unknown to the rest of the disciples, from this abrupt exclamation of the apostle, who invokes in his surprise not only Christ, his own Lord, but the God of his ancestors, namely, God the Father. As if he had said, Lord! what do I see, what do I hear, what do I handle with my hands? He whom Thomas is supposed to call God in this passage, had acknowledged respecting himself, not long before, ver. 17, *I ascend unto my God and your God*. Now the God of God cannot be essentially one with him whose God he is. On whose word, therefore, can we ground our faith with most security—on that of Christ, whose doctrine is clear, or of Thomas, a new disciple, first incredulous, then suddenly breaking out into an abrupt exclamation in an ecstasy of wonder, if indeed he really called Christ his God? For having reached out his fingers, he called the man whom he touched, as if unconscious of what he was saying, by the name of God. Neither is it credible that he should have so quickly understood the hypostatic union of that person whose resurrection he had just before disbelieved. Accordingly, the faith of Peter is commended: *Matt.* xvi. 16, 17, *Blessed art thou, Simon, for having only said, Thou art the Son of the living God*. The faith of Thomas, although, as it is commonly explained, it asserts the divinity of Christ in a much more remarkable manner, is so far from being praised, that it is undervalued, and almost reproved in the next verse: *Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed*. And yet, though the slowness of his belief may have deserved blame, the testimony borne by him to Christ as God, which, if the common interpretation be received as true, is clearer than occurs in any other passage, would undoubtedly have met with some commendation; whereas it obtains none whatever. Hence there is nothing to invalidate that interpretation of the passage which has been already suggested, referring the words *my Lord*, to Christ—*my God*, to God the Father, who had just testified that Christ was his Son, by raising him up from the dead in so wonderful a manner.

"So, too, *Heb. i. 8, Unto the Son, or, Of the Son, he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.* But in the next verse it follows, *Thou hast loved righteousness, &c.; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows,* where almost every word indicates the sense in which Christ is here termed God; and the words of Jehovah put into the mouth of the bridal virgins, *Psal. xlv.,* might have been more properly quoted by this writer for any purpose than to prove that the Son is co-equal with the Father, since they are originally applied to Solomon, to whom, as properly as to Christ, the title of God might have been given on account of his kingly power, conformably to the language of scripture."

With these comments on "three passages" regarded by Milton as "the most distinct of all that are brought forward to prove the divinity of the Son," I conclude my present attention to the "Treatise on Christian Doctrine."

J. T. RUTT.

Instruction of Young Women by Ladies.

*Newport, Isle of Wight,
Jan. 16, 1826.*

SIR,

OBSERVING in your Obituary of Phoebe Russell, of Bridport, in the last Number of the Christian Reformer, [XI. 433,] that she was indebted for much of her high state of moral attainment to her attendance at a week-day meeting in the Chapel Vestry, established by some ladies of the congregation with a view to promote the moral and religious improvement of young persons of their own sex, it would gratify a reader of your Miscellany to be informed of *the mode of instruction* there pursued. It is to be supposed that there are many excellent ladies in most congregations who would gladly assist in communicating religious knowledge if they were made acquainted with the means of carrying their wishes into effect. If any individual connected with this useful method of imparting information would take the trouble to answer the above inquiry, it would much oblige

A FRIEND TO THE PROMOTION OF EARLY PIETY.

INTELLIGENCE.

Second Unitarian Chapel at Nottingham.

At Radford, a populous suburb of Nottingham, a small Unitarian congregation has been raised by the judicious and persevering labours of Mr. JONATHAN HOLMES, formerly a local preacher amongst the Methodists. Hitherto, they have met in a very inconvenient room, (on a first floor,) but are obliged to seek other and better accommodation; and under the countenance of their friends of the other congregation, the High-Pavement, at Nottingham, and the recommendation of the two ministers of that congregation, viz., the Rev. J. Tayler, and the Rev. B. Carpenter, are building a small and plainly furnished chapel, for the completion of which they stand in need of some further help from the Unitarian public, which will, we doubt not, be readily granted. The cost of the ground and of erecting the Chapel is estimated at five hundred pounds. One hundred and twenty pounds have already been collected among the members of the High-Pavement society in Nottingham and at Radford; from the junior members of the former of which are chosen the Trustees of the new Chapel in Radford.—The Society at Radford has combined education with religious instruction, and the new building is to answer the purposes of a school-room as well as a House of Prayer. The congregation have already maintained a Sunday-school, containing about 100 scholars.—Mr. Holmes has drawn up an interesting account of his religious progress, which has been sent to us by the ministers above named, and will be inserted in our next number.—Subscriptions for the Chapel will be received in London by the Rev. R. Aspland, Mare Street, Hackney; and by the Rev. Dr. Rees, Kennington: and at Nottingham, by Mr. William Enfield, Treasurer, and the Rev. James Tayler.

Anniversary of Third Unitarian Chapel, Manchester.

This Chapel is in Salford, a populous part of Manchester, and is called the Green-Gate Chapel. The Rev. J. R. BEARD, late of the York College, is the minister. The erection of the Chapel, which is spacious, cost a large sum of money, of which about 500*l.* remains undischarged, and on account of which the managers appeal to the liberality of individuals, congregations, and Fellowship Funds. It is a strong recommendation of this case, that there are an adult and a Sunday School attached to the chapel, the latter consisting of 100 scholars.

The religious services of the Anniversary were conducted on Sunday, Jan. 1st, by the Rev. E. Higginson, of Derby, and the Rev. J. H. Bransby, of Dudley. The next day the social part of the Anniversary followed, when 140 persons sat down to a

dinner provided in the school-room, RICHARD POTTER, Esq. in the Chair. Many free and enlivening sentiments were proposed from the Chair, with appropriate and interesting observations. On giving Mr. Beard's health, the Chairman said, "I now come to a subject more immediately connected with the object of our meeting; and when I reflect upon the comparative trifling beginning of this Society, the Anniversary of which we are assembled to celebrate, the slender means they had at first to work on, and above all the trying difficulties they have had to encounter; I am struck with astonishment and admiration at observing what great and important results often take place from the most apparently insignificant, and inauspicious commencements: but when those connected with the subject engage in it with that ardour and perseverance which the persons have done who originated and have brought the Green-Gate Society to its present state, what difficulties are there which may not be overcome, what is there which cannot be accomplished? I have witnessed with great delight the rise and progress of this Society, and the able and excellent manner in which its concerns have been managed, but no part of their proceedings, in my humble opinion, has been more judicious and fortunate, or has reflected more credit upon them, than that of their choice of a Minister. To a new congregation they did well to look out for a Minister not only possessed of ability suitable for the situation, but what I consider of the utmost importance, endowed with spirit and zeal to explain and enforce the doctrines of Christianity. That they have been successful, most of you whom I have the honour to address can bear witness. I have myself frequently had the pleasure, and I hope I may add been edified at hearing the manner in which my friend conducts his public services, and I think there is every prospect of the happiest results following; for no man can hear Mr. Beard without being convinced that his whole heart and soul are engaged in the work he has undertaken to do. I have only to add my most sincere wishes, that the connexion thus commenced may be a long, a happy, and a mutually beneficial one."

Mr. Beard's reply, was cordially received. We regret that we are favoured with only a very short sketch of it. He said that, during the time he was at the York College, he found the greatest satisfaction and edification from being a member of the College Missionary Society, and looked back with great delight at the readiness and apparent attention with which his fellow-students and he had been heard and the kindness they experienced from several of the inhabitants in the towns and villages in which they preached. He observed, that it had long appeared to him of great importance that more time and attention should be devoted to preaching and explaining our doctrines to those in humble life, amongst whom they were much misunderstood and misrepresented. He considered it a happiness that a considerable portion of the congregation it was

his privilege to be connected with, were persons in the middle and working class, and he had experienced great delight at the attention with which his services, and particularly his lectures, were listened to. And he concluded with expressing his determination to persevere in that course in which he had begun his ministry, and which he had reason to hope was satisfactory and edifying.

American Unitarian Association.

WE give in the present number the plan of the *British and Foreign Unitarian Association*: we believe we have not yet recorded the formation, and about the same time, of a similar society in the United States of America. We are reminded of this Association of our Transatlantic brethren for Unitarian objects, in a letter from a friend at Philadelphia, dated December 19, of which the following is an extract:

"On the 25th of May last, at Boston, an association was formed, which is styled 'The American Unitarian Association.' its declared objects are, 1. 'To collect and diffuse information respecting the state of Unitarian Christianity in our country. 2. To promote union, sympathy, and co-operation among liberal Christians. 3. To publish and distribute books and tracts inculcating correct views of religion, in such form and at such price as shall afford all an opportunity of becoming acquainted with Christian truth. 4. To employ missionaries, especially in such parts of our country as are destitute of a stated ministry. 5. To adopt whatever other measures may hereafter seem expedient, such as contributions in behalf of clergymen with insufficient salaries, or in aid of building churches, &c., &c.'—These are the words of the instrument."

Religious Intolerance towards a Child.

SIR,

Collumpton, Jan. 8, 1826.

YOUR correspondent had entertained a hope, that the time was at hand when your motto might be dispensed with, but the two articles on intolerance in your *Reformer*, (XI. 419, 427,) and the following specimen of bigotry, confirm the truth of the remark, that "the dregs of the Church of Rome are not yet sufficiently washed from the hearts of many men."

A free school is founded in this town upon the general principle of such institutions, supported by Churchmen and Dissenters, but under the superintendence of the higher powers in the Establishment. It is customary to give the scholars a dinner on Christmas-day. This happening on a Sunday, the dinner was put off till the next day, previous to which all the scholars had received an invitation and instructions to attend. When the long-wished-for morning arrived, they, with gladsome hearts and countenances beaming with gratitude, attended in due time

and order to partake of a repast, such as some of them enjoy perhaps but once a year; but while one of these dear children (a child six years old) was indulging the pleasing thought, he was accosted by a superintendent with "Where did you go yesterday?" "To the meeting, Sir," was the reply (namely, the Unitarian chapel, where he is under the care of his parents). "Then where you go on Sundays, there go for your dinner," and immediately sent him home with a heart bursting with sorrow and disappointment.

I could furnish you with a few more instances of intolerance and persecution which the Unitarians in Collumpton have had to endure; but this shall suffice at present; to us they are not grievous, but joyous, for we rejoice in that we are counted worthy to suffer for *his* name's sake who hath said, "If they have persecuted me they will also persecute you. But rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."—It is now about a twelvemonth since we lost a venerable friend and pastor, the late Rev. John Davis, "at the remembrance of whose worth friendship drops a tear." Then "by the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, yea we wept when we remembered Zion." Having but little or no prospect of giving another minister an adequate salary, being but few in number and most of the few poor, and having been bereaved of those who had chiefly supported the cause for a series of years, we had sunk under the stroke had not the Lord been on our side, who hath turned our sorrowing into joy and lifted upon us the light of his countenance; and I am happy to inform you, that a spirit of inquiry is excited in the town and neighbourhood, that our numbers are considerably increased, and the chapel well filled with attentive hearers.

H. H.

Negro-Slavery.

THIS subject is exciting great attention all over the kingdom. Numerous petitions have been sent up to both Houses of Parliament, and more are contemplated, from congregations, societies, towns and counties. The Dissenting Ministers of the Three Denominations are amongst the petitioners. In a short time, the great question will be discussed in Parliament. What is wanted is that the colonies should be obliged to take measures for the improvement of the condition of the slaves, that they may by degrees be prepared for freedom. If the West-India planters would lose any thing by the measures adopted, let them be indemnified; but let not this foul stain remain any longer upon the character of England. There is reason to hope that the present stir in behalf of the Negroes will not be in vain. His Majesty's Ministers are generally favourable to measures of amelioration; the West-India proprietors alone stand in the

way; but they cannot surely long resist both the government and the people. To such as wish fully to understand the subject and to see one of the best pamphlets ever written, we recommend "An Address to the Electors of Great Britain," headed *England Enslaved by her own Colonies*, by Mr. STEPHEN, the Master in Chancery.

OBITUARY.

Nov. 16. *Stockton-on-Tees*, ELIZABETH ELLERBY, aged 23. After an illness of eight or nine days, this excellent young person was suddenly removed from this state of existence. Her religious principles were fully exemplified in her practice. Her whole deportment was kind, gentle, and unassuming. One proof of the sweetness of her temper, and of her self-command, is worthy of record. The last seven years of her life she spent with an uncle and aunt; during which time, they never heard her utter a single word expressive of anger or resentment. Her conduct was marked by a degree of seriousness, prudence, and modesty, rarely found in so young a person. Her uniform attendance on divine worship; the readiness which she always manifested of making herself useful, especially in promoting the objects of a newly-established Sunday-school, had gained for her the respect and esteem of the Unitarian society of this place, of which she was a member. While her elder relatives mourn in her the loss of a dutiful and affectionate daughter, and her younger ones a kind sister, her fellow-worshippers must regard her removal as having made a vacancy amongst them which will not be speedily filled up. Though the decease of this amiable young person is to her relatives an afflictive dispensation, to herself, we confidently trust, it is a happy change. She has been taken from life without experiencing many of its sorrows; and is removed to a fairer and brighter clime, where her virtues will bloom with increasing vigour. May her mourning relatives and friends seek for peace and comfort in the remembrance of her many excellent qualities, and in the hope that, when they shall have waited their appointed time here, they will be re-united to her in those heavenly mansions which our Lord and Saviour is gone to prepare for all his faithful followers!

J. M.

CORRESPONDENCE.

COMMUNICATIONS have been received from Messrs. J. Philip; J. Emons; and N. Randell: also from the transcriber of the Parable and W. T., who is requested to furnish the full title of the book and the page from which he copies: the last sentence in his MS. is unintelligible.

We insert the communications of our Correspondents whenever we think they are appropriate and will be useful, and are sorry when from any cause we are not able to make use of them.

Mr. MOORE wishes us to notice an Erratum in his Letter in the last number, p. 24, l. 9, from the bottom, where the word *inference* should be used only once, as the last word of the sentence.

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[Vol. XII.

*Letters from the Rev. R. Wright to the Unitarians in
the North-east District.*

LETTER I.

Trowbridge, March 9, 1826.

[THIS district includes the northern parts of Cambridge-shire, the western parts of Norfolk, and the greater part of Lincolnshire.]

MY CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

Among you I had the pleasure of spending some of the most active years of my life in a work which I deemed and still deem most highly important, and which, through the Divine blessing, was attended with considerable success; and we went on together, with mutual affection and persevering exertions, in what we believed to be the cause of God and Truth, until, in the course of Divine Providence, I was removed to a distance from you, and at length fixed as a minister in another part of the kingdom. As increasing years and growing infirmities rendered it necessary for me to withdraw myself from the extended labours in which, for some years, I had the happiness of being engaged, so God, in his providence, opened a way for me to be employed in the same great work, in a more limited sphere, in a part of our Lord's vineyard remote from your district, which prevents my having that frequent intercourse with you, and giving that attention to the good cause among you, and to the prosperity of your churches, and your edification as individuals, which, were it practicable, would be gratifying to me. At what distance soever from you, and how seldom soever I have the opportunity of seeing any of you, the concern I feel for the success of the pure gospel and the spread and increase of true and genuine Christianity among you, is as deep and ardent as when I was labouring in your district and daily instructing you in the way of life. I cannot hear of the cause languishing in any of your churches, of any troubles existing among you, of any thing taking place to prevent your edification and prosperity, or of any of you falling from your

steadfastness or becoming lukewarm and indifferent, without being sensibly affected and feeling much pain. On such occasions I cannot help regretting that distance deprives me of the opportunity of attempting to advise, strengthen and encourage you, or of warning and admonishing, or of comforting you, or of stirring you up to more zeal, as the case might require; of which it is difficult for me, being at a distance, accurately to judge. This concern which I feel for you, and for the success of that cause in which for so many years we united our exertions, for which we laboured and suffered reproach, has determined me to address a few short letters to you through the medium of the *Christian Reformer*. I adopt this method that my friends in all parts of your district may have opportunity of reading them, which could not well be the case, if they were merely written and sent to some particular place; besides, I hope what I write may be useful to Unitarians in some other parts of the country, though more particularly suited to those in your District.

My object in writing is, as an apostle once said, to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance; to excite you to steadfastness and perseverance in your holy profession, and to an increase of Christian zeal; to warn you of the evils and dangers to which you are exposed; and to encourage, strengthen and comfort you, under any difficulties and discouragements you may experience. I am persuaded that you, my brethren, are too well acquainted with the sincerity of my love to you all, and satisfied of the interest I feel in your prosperity and everlasting welfare, to render any apology necessary for my thus addressing you, and for my doing it with much plainness of speech. I can appeal to you all, that during the years I spent among you, I sought not yours but you; that I was ever ready to spend and be spent in your service; that your edification and the success of the cause among you were the objects I continually pursued; and now, while absent from you, I would recall to your remembrance the instructions, warnings and exhortations which I often gave you, and entreat you to keep in view the example of persevering zeal and unwearied exertion in the cause of God and Truth which I left you. Whether we ever meet again in this world or not, we must meet before the judgment-seat of Christ. O! that we may then meet with joy, and that I may have to rejoice in you at that day!

Let me remind you of the days that are past, when we took sweet counsel together and went to the house of God in company; when we had to strive together for the faith of the gospel, to escape from ignorance and error, to free ourselves from the fetters of prejudice and human tradition, and to attain clear and consistent views of the truth as it is in Jesus; when we had to encounter the most formidable difficulties, were exposed to the grossest misrepresentations and the most bitter reproaches, and seemed to stand almost alone in maintaining what were called our new and strange doctrines, being disowned by our former religious connexions, and having, at that time, found scarcely any new ones: yet even then you were not afraid to follow truth on account of its unpopularity, to profess what you believed, and to adhere to a cause which those around you generally despised; you shrank not from difficulties, you persevered in the search after truth, and, as you discovered it, gave it your countenance and support.

May the same ardent love of truth, and zeal in its cause, the same firmness in the midst of difficulties, and determined perseverance in promoting what you believe to be pure and genuine Christianity, ever abide with you. Suffer not your zeal to cool, nor your exertions to be diminished. Let the recollection of former times, of the ardour you then felt in searching after truth, of the pleasure you felt in the discovery of it, of the firmness with which you stood against the opposition you then met with, and of the exertions you then made, revive the same feelings in your breasts and reanimate you in the glorious cause in which you are engaged. If you be weary of well-doing, suffer your zeal to die, and fall from your steadfastness, what reward can you expect? You will lose all your former labour, and forfeit the crown of righteousness which the Lord hath promised to his faithful servants. I pray that this may not be the case with any of you; but that you may hold fast the beginning of your confidence and the rejoicing of hope firm unto the end, always abounding in every good work.

More than thirty years have elapsed since I fixed my residence and began my labours in your district. At that time, though on the whole an Unitarian, my views on many points of doctrine were not completely arranged and fixed; I had still much to do in informing myself and digesting my thoughts on various subjects, and for several

years I knew not of a single Unitarian, either in the town where I was minister or in any part of the district. I had to bring before you, in all the places to which I extended my labours, doctrines which were to you new, and which you had been taught to regard with abhorrence, as dangerous and damnable. This was done gradually, but with openness and perseverance. You heard me with candour and serious attention; you opposed what you thought erroneous, until, by evidence and argument, convinced of its truth; and held fast what you had been taught to regard as truth until brought to perceive its repugnancy to the Scriptures. The conflict we had to go through can best be judged of by those who have had their whole religious system to change, in the midst of a variety of difficulties and continual opposition. At length we so far succeeded in our inquiries and struggles after truth, that Unitarian Christianity, both in doctrine and in worship, seemed firmly established in different parts of the district, and the seeds of it pretty widely scattered: not only were many individuals brought to avow it, but whole congregations; so that Unitarian worship was regularly conducted in different places, and a numerous and respectable association was formed several years before my removal from you.

It is with peculiar interest that I review the time and circumstances to which I have referred, and I am anxious to revive in your minds the devout ardour, mutual affection and holy zeal I have heard you formerly express, and to stir you up to renewed exertions in the great cause in which I have seen you take so lively an interest.

I am, my Christian Brethren, most truly and affectionately, yours, &c.

R. WRIGHT.

Singular Tribute to the Memory of Dr. Priestley.

CERTAIN occurrences, now and then, would almost make us doubt whether the world is making progress in truth and liberty; but there turn up facts occasionally which will allow us to doubt no longer, and bring home to our breasts the delightful assurance, that the efforts of the labourers and sufferers in the cause of mankind have not been in vain, that the standard of the human mind is rising, that prejudice and bigotry are gradually sinking away, and that whatever names of error and offence may

remain, the *spirit* of truth, the spirit of goodness, the *Holy Spirit* (for it is the Spirit of God) is predominant amongst us.

We are led to this remark by what took place at Birmingham in October last. At an annual dinner given by the Low Bailiff, persons of all parties usually assemble. On this occasion, there was, we understand, a more than ordinary mixture of creeds and worships. In such a company, an aged clergyman, Mr. BURN, who had been an eager and fierce opponent of Dr. PRIESTLEY, just before the memorable Riots, took the opportunity of recanting his own prejudices and of shewing respect to the memory of the long-deceased Patriot, Philosopher and Christian Reformer. The key-note of charity was struck, and the chords of Christian benevolence vibrated in harmony throughout every heart.

The following report of the proceedings is from "The Birmingham Journal," a paper lately established in that town, avowedly supporting High-Church principles, but conducted with much impartiality and ability. On the toast being given, *The Established Clergy of this town and neighbourhood,*

The Rev. Mr. BURN said, it devolved upon him to acknowledge the honour they had done the clergy of the town, and himself, by the manner in which the last toast had been received. He felt with peculiar pleasure, after a residence of forty years in Birmingham, the manner in which he had the satisfaction and happiness of meeting that day persons of all opinions on the terms of cordiality. They had seen other days, when discord and disunion stalked abroad; but those times, he hoped, had now gone by for ever. The clergy were instructed in the school of the Constitution and of that Christianity which they taught. In the school of the Constitution they learnt to do what they considered right themselves, and leave others to act according to their own opinion. In that of Christianity, they were taught that that man who was acting in accordance with the spirit of the Gospel was deserving the friendship of his Christian brethren, however different their sentiments might be. That church to which he belonged inculcated feelings of charity to all mankind, and though there might be things in which they differed, they had no prerogative to assume the right of directing the consciences of others. He could only say, that whatever might have been the defects of his own conduct, in the earlier periods of his life, he now felt himself better established in the principles of his religion than at any former period; yet had he to live his past life over again, he should

have to correct the asperity of feelings and expressions which it was his misfortune to have used in his controversies with a late respectable and highly-talented individual (Dr. Priestley). Whatever degree of error there might have been in that procedure, he begged to say, that it did not arise from any disrespect to that highly-respected individual, but from what he then considered to be his duty. (*Cheers.*) The probability was, he might not again have an opportunity of avowing his unintentional errors; and, at the same time, of stating his conscientious opinions. He wished also to declare his satisfaction at the liberal feelings and constitutional sentiments which had been that day expressed, and his entire concurrence with every thing that had been said in that room relative to those liberal principles which might tend to perpetuate the prosperity and happiness of the town of Birmingham. To promote those ends was their purpose in attending that day, and would be their never-ceasing endeavours. (*Loud cheers.*)

The Rev. T. CHAPMAN* expressed his perfect assent to the opinions which had just been delivered, and in accordance with those sentiments, and in that spirit of liberality, he begged to propose the health of the Dissenting Ministers of this town and neighbourhood. (*Loud applause.*)

The Rev. Mr. CORRIE,† in returning thanks, said, he did so with ten-fold pleasure, because he considered the toast they had given as a testimony of their possessing those liberal Christian principles which had been expressed by the clergymen on the other side the table. The spirit of religious bigotry, he hoped, was flying away, and that they should be still more and more united in the bonds of Christian charity.

The Rev. H. HURTON‡ felt himself called upon to express his thanks for the mark of respect which had been shewn to the Dissenting ministers of the town, and he hoped the chairman would excuse his proposing a toast, in unison with the sentiments that had been expressed, which was—the Catholic Clergy of the town of Birmingham.

The Rev. Mr. M'DONNELL§ said, that in rising on this occasion he participated in the feelings expressed by the gentlemen who had preceeded him, and he also experienced sentiments which were peculiar to himself. That was the first time this toast had been proposed on occasions like the present, and he regretted that none more able than himself was there to return thanks adequate to the manner in which the toast had been given. He hailed it as the establishment of the great principle that all the members of the Christian religion are alike worthy

* A Clergyman of the Church of England.

† An Unitarian Minister.

‡ Minister of the Old Meeting (Unitarian), Birmingham.

§ A Catholic Priest.

of being admitted into Christian fellowship—of a system which went to destroy all difference arising from religious sentiments in the great principle of the Christian religion, which was—universal charity. (*Cheers.*) He was ready to enter the arena of religious discussion, and to shew the superiority of his creed by the superior evidence of its possessing that grand principle of Christianity—universal benevolence. Difference of faith would, perhaps, exist till a late period, but it should be their duty to prove that there is one virtue common to all, which is greater than faith; and he hoped the time would come when the spirit of Christian benevolence would be universally diffused, and that they might meet hereafter and unite in one common bond of fellowship. These were the sentiments he had cherished from a child, and were entertained by all his brethren. He felt more than usual in returning thanks to the company on such an occasion, and he most heartily wished health and happiness to them all. (*Loud applause.*)

History of the Unitarian Congregation now building a Chapel at Radford, Nottingham.

SIR, *Nottingham, February 15, 1826.*

THE lively and praiseworthy interest manifested by yourself and a large proportion of your readers in the spread and establishment of doctrines which you believe to be really those of the Gospel, encourage us in an endeavour, through the medium of the Reformer, to direct the attention of the Unitarian public to the situation (as set forth by himself) of a worthy and acceptable Minister, and a respectable, though small, society of Unitarians, of the lower class, in Radford, a populous village in the vicinity of Nottingham.

In the hope that his appeal to public feeling will meet with the countenance and aid which we believe that it deserves, we remain, &c.,

**BENJAMIN CARPENTER,
JAMES TAYLER.**

*To the Rev. Benjamin Carpenter, of the High-Pavement
Society, Nottingham.*

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

WITH respect to the rise, progress and present state of our little society at Radford, I inform you, that we were originally a society of Methodists, amongst whom I was brought up. My parents were pious members of that community; and, when I arrived at years of maturity, I joined the society from a conviction of their piety and

fulness; and amongst them I trust I devoutly worshiped. Being accustomed to reflect upon what I heard, I soon began to doubt respecting various things advanced from the pulpit, as not being consistent with the Scriptures of divine truth. After continuing a member of the Old Connexion for some years, I joined the New, believing it to be more liberal in sentiments, and in the mode of church government. A short time after I became a member in this Connexion, I was appointed to the important office of Local Preacher, upon which high and sacred employment I entered, I trust, with a due sense of its importance, and of the conscientious manner in which it ought to be performed. Having doubts upon various subjects, especially upon the doctrine of the Trinity, and the divinity of Jesus Christ, I was led to think upon these very important subjects; being very desirous of knowing and teaching the truth as it is in Jesus. I could by no means reconcile some things that I heard upon the subject, with what I read in the Scriptures. I could not understand how Christ could be the servant of God, and yet the God he served; the Son, and yet the Father; the way to the Deity, and yet the Deity; to which he led; the only Mediator between God and man; and yet to be worshiped as God without a Mediator; that he should be the appointed Heir of all things, and yet the Sovereign Proprietor; and the like. Though I saw these things to be plainly contradictory, yet, on the other hand, I found many difficulties both in reading and hearing; and such was the perplexity of my mind, that at times I was quite distressed; and in public, when I became the mouth of the congregation, the Almighty only knows what oftentimes I felt from not knowing certainly whether to address only one, or more than one, Divine Person, as I was desirous to lead the people right. In this doubtful state of mind, what had I left to do but diligently to read the Scriptures, with prayer to the Almighty for instruction? This I did, and this I wish all would do, and I doubt not but all in the end would attain to that sweet satisfaction of mind that I did. Yes; though it was a work of time, and indeed of a long time, yet the fullest conviction was the final result. Though there were passages of scripture I could not understand, nevertheless I found many more for the doctrine of the Divine Unity than against it; and, being thus far convinced, (reason and scripture uniting,) I, in the end, no longer doubted. But, oh! Sir, in vain should I attempt to describe the satisfaction

that I derived from so full a conviction upon this important subject. All my prejudices were obliged to give way to the force of divine truth. Then it was, indeed, that I worshiped God in spirit and in truth; then I did it with the understanding and the heart. From this time I became a believer in the Divine Unity, though I retained my belief in the personality of the Spirit, and the pre-existence of Jesus Christ, holding them both to be inferior to the Father, and dependent upon him. Though thus convinced, I was not inclined to quit my present connexions, being closely attached to my friends, to their mode of worship, of church government, and the like. In process of time, however, a few Unitarian books being put into my hands, I read them with attention. I cannot say that much alteration was produced in my views, but the new sentiments which I had imbibed were more fully impressed upon my mind, so that I could not sit under the preaching of Trinitarian doctrines with the same kind of feeling as I before did. As to my speaking in public, I proceeded in the same way that I had long done; for I always spoke agreeably to my sentiments, though I suppose that might not often be perceived. While my mind was in this state, I happened to hear a discourse on the subject of Redemption, in the delivery of which the preacher very emphatically said, "Yes, you are redeemed with the blood of God." Now, though this language was not entirely new to me, yet it was either uttered in a different manner, or, if not, produced an effect upon my mind different to any I had ever before experienced, so that I felt myself bound to speak to the minister upon the subject. This was a cause of my sentiments being more fully known: for, though I had before sometimes spoken to some of my more particular friends upon these subjects, yet my views were not, generally, even suspected. Now, however, they were no longer concealed; nor did I wish that they should. I then little thought of the misrepresentation to which I exposed myself and my sentiments.—I had now to pass through a most fiery trial, for which I was but ill prepared. Such was the nature of my situation, that many of my dear friends I felt myself compelled to leave. I did it with the utmost deliberation, though with the most painful sensations of mind. God and my own conscience were my support under the uncharitable behaviour of those friends. Within the course of twelve months after I left the Methodist con-

94 *History of the Unitarian Congregation at Radford.*

nexion, a few of my former friends seceded from the very society at New Radford to which I had belonged, though not at all on my account, but owing to some difference that had arisen amongst them and other members of that society. Having so done, they solicited me to unite with them, and to conduct divine worship among them. With their solicitations, on certain conditions, I complied. I advised them to act with deliberation; and added, that if, after mature thought, they should be inclined to return to the friends they had left, they ought by all means so to do; but that, if they should not be so inclined, I would freely explain my sentiments to them; and, if we could so far agree as to unite in affection, I would assemble with them, and render them all the assistance in my power. Coming to a seeming understanding, we met together in a small dwelling-house on the 21st Sept. 1818, in which house we continued to meet for a length of time; and our meetings were, I believe, both pleasant and profitable. In the course of time we, after some changes, thought it best to adopt the usual mode of worship. We embraced the first opportunity of getting a larger place, and of commencing a Sunday-school, which we did in 1819. We had soon many scholars, and upon the whole they were well attended to. Many hearers joined our little society; and this seemed to be the beginning of good days. But, alas! these appearances did not last. One and another forsook us. A few friends continued steadfast in the cause; and I endeavoured to persevere in the important work, in the best manner I was able, of converting sinners and building up believers in their most holy faith. I led the minds of my little flock to the plain, but all-important, truths of the Gospel: often dwelling with delight on the Unity of the Godhead, and the free, unmerited Grace of God. Yes, Sir, on these delightful subjects I have ever loved to dwell. Are we told that the Unitarian scheme is not calculated to afford satisfaction to the mind? I would ask, what can give equal comfort to the pious soul as a firm belief in one God, the fountain of all goodness, the "Father of lights, with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning"? Yes, Sir, to dwell upon his rich, his free, unmerited grace, has ever been my most delightful theme. Believing these things thus fully, and discoursing upon them frequently, I did not doubt but that, in course of time, all my friends would embrace the same truths. I found it, however, a more difficult task than I

had calculated upon, to remove old prejudices. Of my friends who first set out with me, all, excepting one, in course of time left us, and returned to the Methodists. This, though trying, was doubtless for the best, as I believe it excited a spirit of inquiry among my people, and caused those that stood, to stand the faster. We have been gaining and losing as we have proceeded; but, upon the whole, I trust we have been gradually increasing. Some of our earlier converts remain with us to this day, and we have still kept adding one and another: we have lost one, and only one, by death. I was favoured with the acquaintance of the late Rev. H. Turner, whose condescending kindness will ever, I trust, be gratefully remembered by me, and whose memory is exceedingly dear to me. But, though the humble, pious spirit which he manifested, did much towards removing my prejudices, yet, on various accounts, I was prevented from cultivating an intimate acquaintance with Unitarian friends. In 1823, I found, through a variety of circumstances, my spirits sink, and my health decline; so that I perceived I could not long continue my usual labour, and that I must either obtain some assistance, or the cause must decline. I knew not where to look but to Unitarian friends; and, after consulting my people, (without whom I have never done any thing of moment,) I made my situation known, and found the greatest spirit of willingness to assist me was manifested. I would make grateful mention of that truly Christian benevolence displayed in the conduct of the Rev. Mr. Tayler and yourself, and likewise of some of the members of your congregation, from whom we have received assistance to the present time; moreover, pecuniary aid, unasked, but timely afforded, both for the use of the school and society.—Permit me here to say, that we have for a long time laboured under great inconvenience, on account of the smallness and uncomfortableness of the room which we occupy, as our school has increased to the number of a hundred scholars. Though our congregation is not large, (I suppose not averaging more than forty persons,) yet, upon the whole, we have long been uncomfortable for want of more room, and are convinced that if we had a larger and more convenient place, the number both of scholars and of the congregation would be much increased. As we cannot be accommodated with a larger room, otherwise than by building one, we turned our attention to that important object. Neverthe-

less, from the smallness of our numbers and our very limited circumstances, we saw but little prospect of realizing our wishes. From this consideration we should indeed have set down in despair, had we not remembered that we had friends in Nottingham; to them, therefore, having humbly but confidently looked up, we have received all the encouragement our sanguine hopes had anticipated, as the most willing disposition has been manifested by many kind friends to assist us, not only with money, but in any other possible way. Though this might have made us greatly dependent, yet have you left us perfectly free and independent. I trust, Sir, I shall never forget the truly liberal spirit manifested in this respect in a vestry meeting held at the High-Pavement Chapel. Being thus warmly supported by our kind friends at home, and being encouraged to hope we shall meet with friendly assistance from those at a distance, we are about to commence building. Soon may the Chapel be reared, and long may it stand sacred to the worship of the One living and true God!

I remain, Rev. Sir, yours very respectfully,
Radford, July 4, 1825.

J. HOLMES.

On Self-examination.

"It is remarkable that no persecutors ever expressed any commiseration for the sufferings of those whom they persecuted. Our Saviour apprized his disciples that they who killed them would think they did God service. Paul thought the same; and the bigoted Jews in general persecuted through *ignorance*. But were they therefore innocent? There is a kind of *ignorance that is highly criminal*, arising not only from neglect of making inquiry, which itself arises from criminal prejudice, but from a secret malignity of temper, which conceals itself under the notion of zeal for religion.

"That persons frequently mistake the real motives of their own conduct, and thereby form a wrong judgment of their own characters, is notorious. What man ever thought himself to be covetous, though all the world saw him to be so in the extreme? Or what man ever thought himself proud? And yet pride is certainly not banished from the world. Nay, did ever any man, except in reflecting on his conduct afterwards, think himself a bad husband, a bad father, or a bad master?"

THESE are sentiments worthy the pen of him who wrote them, though he was one of the first literary characters in the world. They struck my mind very forcibly, as shewing the importance of continual self-examination, and, with the hope that they might prove of use to some of your readers, I send them, with a few remarks subjoined, for insertion, if you think proper, in your little work.

It is said that Philip of Macedon employed a monitor to follow him every day, repeating in his ear, "Remember thou art but a man;" so ought every man's monitor, Conscience, to repeat, "Remember that thou canst see other people's sins and imperfections better than thy own." But this monitor frequently wants admonishing itself, and, like that of Philip of Macedon, is not always awake: so the zealous stickler for a particular tenet, for the belief of which he perhaps has no better foundation than that his parents believed the same before him, and theirs before them, should check himself in the heat of the debate and ask himself if he is not arguing more for victory than for conviction and a desire to come at truth, even if it should sap the foundation of his early prejudices. Yes, victory over an opponent, which is so pleasing even in opinions which are comparatively of little importance, may so blind the mind as to bear the semblance of zeal for religion, and thus lead us to impute our conduct to a good motive rather than to a mean and selfish one.

To apply this blindness of the mind to our conduct in relation to sins which may be called premeditated, "what man ever thought himself to be covetous, a bad master, a bad father?" &c. How easy is it to be led to call that prudence which ought rather to be called niggardly parsimony; that necessary restraint and correction which ought to be called oppression and selfish tyranny; that becoming dignity which ought to be called pride! And how easy is it for us who are young, and who seem particularly privileged to bask in the sunshine of pleasure, to pursue the pleasing phantom till we ruin that health and pervert that time which are the most valuable blessings we shall ever enjoy! Thus, in the various seasons of life, we ought to be doubtful of our motives, to see that we are not guilty of "criminal ignorance."

"To know thyself, O man!
All wisdom centres there,"

says the moralist; "Watch and pray," says the Scripture, because "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked."

In regard to unpremeditated sins, into which we rashly run, reason has not time to exert her influence; here we are seduced by the prospect of present pleasure—the gratification of the moment, when perhaps the consequences

attendant on yielding to the temptation are very bitter and very protracted. Here, perhaps, nothing is so efficacious as some short ejaculation, some sentiment which has been stamped upon the memory ever since the days of childhood, something that may check us as we rush on, and lead us to reflect that there is an Eye which seeth through thick darkness, that pervades every spot in the universe, that penetrates the heart; that there is a God, under whose canopy of sparkling stars we are always placed, go where we will. Then let us endeavour to have our minds so fortified, that in the hour of temptation we may look upwards and say, "Thou, God, seest me!" or, like Joseph under temptation, may we exclaim, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God!"

IGNOTUS.

Mr. Moore on the Divine Origin and Authority of the Sabbath.

(LETTER IV.)

SIR,

WE have seen that our Lord himself, so far from abolishing the Sabbath, gave sufficient sanction to the observance of it by his example, as well as by his observations on the subject on several occasions, and that he not only contemplated, but approved of the continuance of this observance among his followers at a time when what was peculiar in the Mosaic dispensation would be no longer binding upon them, as appears from the remarkable passage in Matt. xxiv. 20. Have his apostles, then, abolished the Sabbath; and, as they received no commission from him for this purpose, in so doing have they acted in opposition to his manifest design in a case of so much importance? This is not probable, certainly; and that they have not done so will appear, I have no doubt, from what occurs in reference to the subject in the Acts and Epistles. From these writings it is manifest, that notwithstanding the unsettled and harassing situation of the Christian churches of the first ages, at least one day in seven was devoted to religious purposes by the apostles and their converts in general.

Several passages in the Acts are sufficient to shew that it was the custom of St. Paul, after his conversion, and of the other apostles, to attend the worship of the synagogues

on the Sabbath-day, wherever they might be; * nor in this practice was there any thing inconsistent with the liberty which Christianity had conferred upon them, for in these places neither the Levitical rites, nor any thing that was peculiar to the Mosaic law, was observed. Had the apostles received any private injunction from our Lord, in their interviews with him after his resurrection, not to observe the Sabbath, they certainly would not have recommended this practice by their example, instead of enjoining the prohibition of it upon others. No such prohibition occurs in the account of their proceedings, though several very suitable opportunities for that purpose took place, particularly when they met in council at Jerusalem to determine the question whether the law of Moses was binding upon the Gentile converts or not. Other things are forbidden, but not the observance of the Sabbath.

It is to be observed, moreover, that the circumstances and customs of Christians in general, at that time, rendered the observance of a fixed day for their public religious services indispensable. We learn from the Acts and the Epistles, that, as soon as their situation would allow, the converts to Christianity were every where united into churches, or societies, for religious purposes; and that they met frequently in order to celebrate the Lord's-supper, and also to join in prayers and singing, on which occasions were added prophesying or teaching, as well as reading the Scriptures, all of which were required to be done decently and in order. In addition to this, elders were selected by the apostles themselves in all the different churches, who were to be entirely devoted to the ministry, and whose business it was to teach and, probably, to conduct the devotions of the people. But how were these things at all practicable, if stated times were not set apart for such purposes? Whether the religious services of the synagogue furnished the model of those that were practised in Christian churches or not, it is certain there was great resemblance between the one and the other, and to both a Sabbath, or a day freed from worldly occupation, was essential.

As it was in itself matter of no importance whatever, which of the days of the week was selected for this purpose, the first seems to have been substituted gradually, at

* See Acts xiii. 14, xvi. 13, xvii. 2, xviii. 4, xix. 8.

a very early period, under the sanction of the apostles themselves, for the seventh, and not without reason, as the resurrection of our Lord from the dead on this-day was an event in the highest degree worthy of such celebration, and especially as this celebration would serve for a perpetual memorial of the reality of that event; an event, next to the creation, the most interesting and the most important in its results of any that are recorded in the Scriptures. Accordingly there are several indications in the New Testament of the observance, before the death of the apostles, of what is called (Rev. i. 10) the Lord's-day.* It was on the first day of the week that the disciples were met together, when our Lord appeared to them immediately after his resurrection (John xx. 19); and again, "within eight days," or "eight days after," (ver. 26,) that is, on the first day of the following week, they were assembled, with the doors shut for fear of the Jews, when our Lord appeared to them a second time; and it is highly probable that these meetings were of a religious kind, for we find that their meetings afterwards generally were such. On the day of Pentecost, which appears to have been the first day of the week† also; the apostles and one hundred and twenty other disciples‡ were assembled together for religious purposes, "with one consent," or were engaged in social worship. A considerable time after this, when Paul was at Troas, "on the first day of the week," it is said, Acts xx. 7, "when the disciples came together to break bread," that is, as the phrase signifies, to celebrate the Lord's-supper, with which their usual religious worship was connected, Paul preached to them. This last passage is directly to the purpose; for it shews evidently, that in the times of the apostles themselves, it was the practice of Christians generally to meet on the first day of the week for religious worship, and it was most probably on this account that St. Paul exhorted the Corinthians (1 Cor. xvi. 2) to lay up in store, on the first day of the week, for

* That this was the first day of the week is evident from the circumstance that this day was generally known, among Christians of the first ages, by the name of the Lord's-day, and also because it was so called on account of our Lord's resurrection from the dead on this day.

† See Dr. Jennings' Jewish Antiquities, B. ii. Ch. v.; and Dr. Benson's First Planting of Christianity, B. i. Ch. i. § i.

‡ Acts ii. 1, compared with Ch. i. 15.

the relief of the indigent, as God had prospered them. All these are plain indications of the commencement of the practice in the days of the apostles, and, consequently, with their sanction, which afterwards substituted the first day of the week for the seventh, as the time to be set apart for public religious services. Whether it be called the Sabbath, the Lord's-day, or, as in the time of Justin Martyr, "Sunday," is of as little real importance as whether it be the first or seventh day of the week. The observance itself and the design of it are the same. If one day of the week be abstracted from secular employment, and devoted chiefly to religious worship and improvement, it is in fact the Sabbath, and in every view fulfils the purpose with which that most important of all institutions was originally appointed; an institution more evidently necessary to the practical influence and even the existence of Christianity than it was formerly to Judaism, since the latter had many other ordinances wonderfully adapted to the maintainance of its power over the minds of the people which the former has not.

The practice of the Christian churches, immediately after the apostolic age, with reference to this subject, is evidently of great importance, for it shews what was the practice that prevailed in the times of the apostles themselves, and with their concurrence and approbation. It was my intention, therefore, to have quoted the principal passages from the early Christian writers, which prove that it was at that time the custom of the churches in general to observe the first day of the week at least regularly, as their day for religious worship and instruction; which services were of considerable length, and in a great measure similar to those in use at present: but I have trespassed so much upon your indulgence already, that I shall not now attempt this. It is the less necessary, however, as these authorities may be seen in the *Theological Repository*, (Vol. VI. p. 463,) in one of Dr. Priestley's papers in defence of the Sabbath. These quotations serve to shew, that this is an historical fact of which there is not the slightest room to doubt. The well-known passage on the subject in Justin's *Apology* is itself sufficient, and is so expressly to the purpose, that I shall take the liberty of introducing it here: "On the day called Sunday," says he, "there is an assembling together, in one place, of all who live in the cities or the country; the records of the apos-

cles," (that is, the books of the New Testament generally,) "or the writings of the prophets, are read, as time permits. When the reader has finished, the president delivers a discourse, admonishing the people and exhorting them to copy in their conduct the excellent things which they have heard: then all rise together and pray; and when we have ceased praying, bread and wine and water are brought; and the president, in like manner, offers up prayers and thanksgivings, according to his ability, and the people express their concurrence by saying, Amen. Then all who are present partake of the elements, which are distributed among them, and portions are sent to the absent by the deacons."* There are various other passages in the early Christian writers, all of them giving express testimony to the same fact; some of them asserting, indeed, that they did not keep the Sabbath, that is the seventh day observed by the Jews, but the Lord's-day, which they sometimes call the eighth day, or the first day of the week, on account of his resurrection from the dead. It was a mere change of the day, for both were devoted to similar purposes, namely, the social worship of God, reading the Scriptures, and religious instruction. I ask, then, how came the practice of devoting the first day of the week to religious purposes to be universal among Christians immediately after, and indeed during the time of the apostles, if this custom received from them no sanction or authority?

After all this, are we to believe that the Apostle Paul, from whose writings most of the controversies so long existing among Christians have arisen, on his own authority alone, has removed all obligation from Christians to the sabbatical or religious observance of one day in seven? I say on his own authority alone, for he nowhere affirms that he had received a divine commission for this purpose, and there is not a syllable in the Epistles of the other apostles on the subject. There are three passages only in the Epistles of St. Paul that bear upon the subject, and these, upon examination, will be found to have no real hostility to this custom. To the Galatians, who had formerly been Pagans, the Apostle says, Gal. iv. 10, "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I fear concerning you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in

* Apol. par. 87, p. 131, Oxon, 1760.

vain. Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am, for I am as ye are." All this, however, has reference to Heathen superstitions, to which the Galatians were still addicted, notwithstanding their conversion to Christianity; nor is there any reason to believe the Apostle had the Sabbath on this occasion in his mind. This will appear if we turn to the verses immediately preceding: "At that time when ye knew not God, ye were slaves to those who by nature are not gods; but now, after ye have known God, or rather have been known by him, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements to which ye desire to be again in servitude? Ye observe days," &c. So that the observance of days, and months, and times, and years, alludes entirely to the customs which were prevalent among them, when they were worshipers of false gods, and which the Apostle calls weak and beggarly elements. This passage, therefore, has no concern with our subject. Nor is it impossible that there might be a similar allusion in Rom. xiv. 5, &c.: "One man esteemeth one day above another; but another man esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He who regardeth the day, regardeth it to the Lord; and he who regardeth not the day, to the Lord he regardeth it not." That is, in both cases, each individual acts as the servant of God, and from a principle of obedience to his will. In the next verse he adds, "He that eateth, eateth to the Lord; for he giveth God thanks: and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. For none of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself," &c. Here it is probable the Apostle refers to scruples of conscience then prevalent about the eating of meat that had been offered to idols; and if so, what is there to prevent our supposing he alludes, in the 5th and 6th verses, in what he says on the observance of days, to similar scruples relative to customs derived originally from Paganism? The Apostle's object, in the whole of this chapter, is to restrain the spirit of judging harshly of others, especially on subjects not essential to salvation; a spirit in direct opposition to the liberty introduced by the gospel. At any rate, supposing him to allude to the Sabbath, the whole amount of what he affirms is this, namely, there are different opinions on the subject, but whoever acts from a principle of conscience, whichever side of the question he adopts, is accepted of God; a position which no consistent

Protestant will impugn. He does not affirm that, in his opinion, it is matter of no importance whether one day in seven be devoted to religious purposes or not, and if he had, his practice would have been at variance with his doctrine, as well as with the conduct and instructions of his venerated Master. These passages, therefore, may be fairly set aside as containing nothing hostile to the Sabbath. The only remaining text on the subject is, Col. ii. 16, 17, "Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holiday," (a feast,) "or the new moon, or of the Sabbath days" (or day). That is, no man has any right to condemn you, in the use of your Christian liberty to judge for yourselves, because your practice respecting these things is different from his. "Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body" (substance) "is of Christ." Supposing the seventh-day Sabbath to be here alluded to, as Milton and others maintain, then it would refer to a passage in Clemens Alexandrinus, which may serve to illustrate this passage and remove the difficulty. After observing, that when God had created the world he gave the seventh day to us for rest, on account of the troubles and afflictions of life, since he himself is incapable of weariness or suffering, he intimates, that it was intended to prepare the way for the observance of the eighth day, as he calls it, that is, the first day of the week, which he styles the chief of days, in reference to the new creation, our rest indeed, and a day which brings with it the pure light of truth, free from all obscurity.* Thus, in the opinion of Clemens, the seventh-day Sabbath was introductory to, or a shadow of, the Lord's-day, that is, the Christian Sabbath; and I at least can see nothing in the words of St. Paul inimical to this supposition. We know that the first day of the week, on account of our Lord's resurrection from the dead, began to be observed by Christians in the earliest times, instead of the seventh, and the Apostle in this passage might very possibly allude to disputes then existing, as to which of the days ought to be observed, and all that can be inferred from what he says on the subject is, that no one had a right to condemn another because he differed from him in relation to it both in opinion and practice. But after the evidence that has been adduced in these letters in favour of the Sabbath,

* Clem. Alex. Strom. L. vi. p. 810, Pass.

and what we know of the Apostle's conduct in reference to it, I can never be of opinion he meant to teach that it was of no consequence whether one day in seven were devoted to religious purposes or not. The Apostle, indeed, might allude here to the rigid and superstitious abstinence from manual occupation, to the legal and expensive and burdensome ceremonies, including the double sacrifices both morning and evening, with which the seventh day was observed by the Jews; all which ceremonies were then abolished; and he might very properly remind the Colossians, that no man had a right to condemn them for their non-observance of these intolerable rites and superstitions on the seventh day; but, at any rate, there is not a syllable in the passage inimical to the Lord's-day, then set apart by Christians, and apparently by himself, to a purer, a simpler, and far more edifying mode of worship. These three texts, then, in my estimation, weigh nothing in opposition to the arguments advanced in these letters in support of the Sabbath.

There is not room to proceed with any additional remarks; I shall, therefore, conclude by observing, that it was my object to shew that we have sufficient authority from the Scriptures to abstract from secular employment one day in seven, to be devoted chiefly to religious purposes; and must leave it, Sir, to your readers to judge for themselves whether this design have been accomplished. Of the utility, and even the necessity of such an institution, in a moral and religious view, there can surely be but one opinion in the Christian world. I have only to add now, that, as the observance of a Sabbath has accompanied the progress of Christianity from the first, so, in my opinion at least, if the observance of it were to be laid aside universally, the influence, if not the existence in society, of this best of all systems of faith and practice, would speedily be annihilated.

THOS. MOORE.

“Orthodox Tactics: or, a new Mode of Attack and Defence,” adopted against Mr. Adam in the East Indies.

[From “The Unitarian Repository,” &c., No. VI., March, 1824.—
“Calcutta: printed at the Unitarian Press. Price One Rupee.”]

THE following communications are inserted in the [*Calcutta*] Repository, as illustrative of the true nature of Or-

thodox zeal; a zeal which is eager to make an unprovoked attack under circumstances that render defence impossible, but which refuses to discuss on equal ground doctrines that are delivered *ex cathedra* as if with all the authority of inspiration.

The occasion which led to these communications was this: Mr. Adam having proceeded on the river for the benefit of his health, on his arrival at Chandernagore, accepted the kind invitation of the gentleman to whom the letter No. I is addressed, to remain at his house for a few days. As Mr. C—— and family are in the habit of attending divine service at Chinsurah church, in which the Missionaries resident at that settlement regularly officiate, Mr. A. of course proposed to accompany them; not supposing that his mere presence would prove offensive. In this, however, he was mistaken, for the Missionaries having become acquainted with his intention, seem to have considered his simple attendance as an attack upon the doctrines of orthodoxy, if not upon the orthodox themselves; and accordingly both the morning and the evening preachers not only felt themselves called upon to enter generally into a defence of these doctrines, but even had recourse in their prayers, as well as in their discourses, to the most unequivocal personal allusions. The extempore discourse, delivered in the morning by Mr. Mundy, was chiefly remarkable for a discovery which the preacher communicated to his audience, that the Devil was neither an Arian, an Arminian, nor a Pelagian, but a true orthodox believer; and also for the unsparing use which he made of the thunders of God's wrath against all those who should hold a different creed. Mr. La Croix, the evening preacher, delivered a written discourse, which, however ultra-orthodox may have been some of the doctrines advanced in it, was at least clear in its arrangement and connected in its parts, and laid claim to the merit of being close and consecutive in its reasoning. While, therefore, the personal allusions already referred to compelled Mr. A. to adopt some step for the vindication both of his religious sentiments, he felt no difficulty in determining to whom he should address himself; and accordingly requested Mr. C—— to forward a copy of No. I. to the Rev. Mr. La Croix, who, through the same medium, returned the answer marked No. II.

No. I.—From Mr. Adam to A—C—, Esq.

MY DEAR SIR,

The lateness of our return last night from Chinsurah church; and the necessity of my early departure this morning, have prevented me from fulfilling the intention which I intimated to you of addressing Mr. La Croix on the subject of the sermon which we heard him preach; and I shall therefore feel obliged by your doing it for me.

Express to him, if you please, my sincere thanks for the luminous views which he gave of the doctrines of reputed orthodoxy, and at the same time my strong objections to them as unscriptural and unreasonable.

To endeavour to prove this, I would request permission either to occupy his place in the pulpit for one Sunday evening, or that he would publish the sermon which he preached, and to which, in that case, I hereby engage to reply through the medium of the press, or that he would meet me either at your house or his own, each in company with a single friend, on Friday next, at 10 in the forenoon, when we may leisurely discuss the successive paragraphs of his very able discourse.

The direct and pointed language employed both in his sermon and prayers, especially the latter, renders an apology for my apparent presumption in making these offers unnecessary; and I beg you will assure him that it is not to indulge the angry spirit of controversy, but with an earnest and sincere desire to vindicate the truth as it is in Jesus, that they have been made. From the tenor of Mr. La Croix's discourse, I feel persuaded that one or other of them will be accepted by him, and that the consequent investigation will, on his part, be carried on with the manners of a gentleman and the spirit of a Christian.

Yours very truly,

W. ADAM.

Chandernagore, Monday morn. 6½ a. m.

No. II.—From Mr. La Croix to A—C—, Esq.

MY DEAR SIR,

I duly received your note yesterday evening; but as I was not at home, could not answer it immediately.

I have perused Mr. Adam's letter, wherein he seems to wish me to enter into a controversy with him on the doctrines he has found proper to reject as unscriptural and unreasonable. I kindly request you to tell him, that I consider such a controversy as perfectly useless in the present circumstances, as the doctrines in question, which are (according to my ideas) for every unprejudiced mind set forth in Scripture in the plainest manner, have already been discussed and demonstrated so fully by men of far greater abilities than my own, that it may, I

think, satisfy any one who, with *an humble spirit*, is searching after truth.

I consequently feel it not only my inclination, but my duty, to decline positively, once for ever, to agree to any of Mr. Adam's proposals; my time likewise being too precious to me to be employed or rather wasted in disputes of which experience has shewn so frequently, that no good fruits have ever proceeded from, neither in Calcutta of late, nor elsewhere.

Believe me, my dear Sir, yours very truly,

A. F. LA CROIX.

Chinsurah, Feb. 24, 1824.

On this reply a few remarks will suffice. The first thing worthy of notice is, that Mr. La Croix does not attempt to deny "the direct and pointed language employed both in his sermon and prayers, especially the latter." If such language had not been used, Mr. A. would never have thought of making any of those proposals which, after having provoked them, Mr. La Croix has deemed it proper positively to decline.

He says, that the doctrines he preaches "are set forth in Scripture" in a manner sufficiently plain "for every unprejudiced mind." But this is taking for granted the very question at issue; for there are some who consider that every page of Scripture contains a refutation of these doctrines, and that it is only a mind under the influence of the deepest prejudice that can profess to ground its belief of them upon the authority of revelation.

He considers that the doctrines in question have been "discussed and demonstrated" by men of far greater abilities than himself. Those who admire his modesty cannot applaud his consistency. This might have been a good excuse for leaving these doctrines untouched altogether: it is but a sorry reply to a challenge to which he himself had given occasion.

His time likewise is too precious to be "employed, or rather wasted," in such disputes. It is to be hoped, therefore, that should circumstances ever happen a second time to bring a heterodox stranger within the reach of his voice, *he* will not be required to "waste" *his* time in listening to doctrines which are confessedly of so little worth.

But "experience," it is said, "has frequently shewn that no good fruits have ever proceeded from such discussions." On the contrary, all experience proves that truth

is ever a gainer by the candid, temperate and free investigation of existing popular opinions; and to such an investigation alone Mr. La Croix was invited. It is on this principle that Mr. La Croix acts as a Missionary to the Heathen; and it will be found that the errors of idolatry which he opposes, and the corruptions of Christianity which he supports, will both give way just in proportion as a spirit of liberal and independent inquiry is excited. It is only error and corruption that love to stagnate: truth and goodness seek to diffuse their blessings all around.

Mr. La Croix seems to have no difficulty in determining who those are that seek truth "*with an humble spirit.*" For this purpose he does not consider it necessary to inquire into the actual temper of their minds, but only into the result of their investigations. If the conclusion to which they come perfectly accord with his own opinions, then they possess every characteristic of sincere inquirers. But if a man will believe only upon evidence, if he will not receive every pulpit dictum with profound submission, if he venture to offer any objection to the notions of his ghostly friends, then he is in effect told "Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us"—us, the favourites of Heaven, the chosen of the Lord, the ministers of his word, and the messengers of his grace?

Since the above was written, Mr. Adam has heard two other discourses delivered by the same gentlemen in the same place of worship. The morning preacher was even more outrageously violent than on the former occasion. With an unblushing hardihood in which, it is to be hoped, he will find few admirers and still fewer imitators, he did not hesitate to declare that if Jesus Christ was not God, then the Apostle Paul was a fool, and the Bible a bundle of lies. And yet this is one of the men who are accustomed to accuse Unitarians of being deficient in reverence for the Sacred Scriptures and for apostolic authority, and of torturing both into a conformity with their creed. Unless Mr. Mundy seek to rival his Holiness at Rome, he will at least admit that he *may be* mistaken in his interpretation of the Scriptures; and if it should at last appear that he *is* mistaken, then how serious the predicament in which he has placed himself, by thus presumptuously pledging his own fallible opinion against the inspiration of Paul and the truth of the Bible!

The evening preacher delivered a very excellent discourse on *the free grace of God*; a doctrine which all Unitarians most cordially embrace, but in which Mr. La Croix very inconsistently believes; considering as he does that mankind can be justified from their sins only by the merits of Christ, and that by his sufferings and death the salvation of sinners was *purchased*, and an *equivalent paid* to God for receiving them into his favour.

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Unitarian Lectures at Devonport.

SIR,

Devonport, Jan. 15, 1826.

If the subjoined letters be not inadmissible, the friends of Unitarianism in this town will feel obliged by their insertion in your valuable Miscellany. The Course of Lectures alluded to commenced September 25, and terminated December 11, 1825, and they embraced the following subjects: 1. *Freedom of Inquiry and the Use of Reason.* 2. *Mystery.* 3. *Heresy.* 4. *The Doctrine of the Trinity.* 5. *Christ Crucified.* 6. *Christ not composed of Two Natures.* 7. *Christ neither God nor a Pre-existent Spirit.* 8. *Christ testifies to his own Inferiority.* 9. *Christ gradually raised to Deity.* 10. *Christ the Son of Man.* 11. *Christ the Son of God.* 12. *Christ an Example.* They were remarkably well attended, the large room which we occupy for public worship (which is capable of seating about 300 persons) being full, or nearly so, every evening; and a new impulse seems to have been given to the cause by their delivery.

NICHOLAS RUNDELL.

DEAR SIR,

Devonport, Dec. 18, 1825.

We, the undersigned, belonging to the congregation meeting for public worship at the large room, 98, Fore Street, desire to present you our sincere thanks for your kindness in conducting the services, generally, in that place for several years; but more particularly for the very excellent course of Lectures you have lately delivered on the Trinity, and on the Person and Character of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, &c.

In those Lectures you very powerfully enforced the superior motives to a virtuous life, which we, as Unitarian Christians, derive from our views of his person and character. May we, therefore, more fully express our estimation of these views by the improvement of our temper and lives!

May God bless you for the instruction you have so readily

and freely bestowed; may you see the opinions you so ably advocate become more extensively prevalent; may he give you every needful blessing in this life; and "when the Chief Shepherd shall appear," may you "receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away"! This is the earnest wish of

Your very much obliged Friends.

(Here follows fifty signatures.)

To Mr. Silvanus Gibbs,
28, Charlotte Street, Morice Town.

Morice Town, 28, Charlotte Street,
Dec. 21, 1825.

MY CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your kind letter in testimony of your approbation of my public labours generally, and particularly of the course of Lectures recently delivered on Sunday evenings. This voluntary and unexpected favour is, I assure you, duly appreciated; and I trust that it will excite zeal and animate my future exertions in the cause of uncorrupted Christianity.

I regret that my abilities are so inadequate to the important work in which, by your suffrage, I am engaged; but it will ever be my study to endeavour to compensate for deficiency of talent by industry and perseverance. It was not a confidence in my own powers which at first induced me to stand forward as a public advocate of the pure gospel; but a deep and feeling sense of the prevalence of error, and an anxious and, I trust, a laudable solicitude to diffuse "the truth as it is in Jesus." Had a more efficient person presented himself for this purpose I should not have obtruded myself on your notice, as it would have been more agreeable to my natural disposition to take my station among the audience. It, however, appeared to me altogether useless merely to lament a deficiency of zeal among the professors of Unitarianism; the most effectual method, I considered, would be, to put my own shoulder to the wheel and exert all my strength (feeble as it is) in order to extricate the waggon out of the mire; for it is by our *united* and *well-directed* efforts, and not by lamentations, that the reign of error will be overthrown and the progress of truth and virtue be accelerated.

Thanks to the great and good men who, under the Divine blessing, have preceded us in the honourable career of REFORMATION, our labours are far less arduous than they would otherwise have been; for by their deep researches into the Holy Scriptures and Christian antiquity, and by their luminous expositions and illustrations, our task is comparatively an easy one. We have little more to do than use our judgment in selecting from their treasures, and in moulding their arguments

and criticisms into a popular form. A learned ministry is unquestionably of eminent advantage, where it can be obtained; and I hope the Academy at York will long flourish under its present excellent tutors, and continue to supply our opulent churches with learned and exemplary young men, who, by their talents and virtues, will do honour to themselves and to the Unitarian cause; but a great deal might be done by those that have not been favoured with a classical education, if they would make the best use of the means which the Almighty has graciously put into their power. May all perceive and feel the importance of their respective situations, and act accordingly, as probationers for eternity! As the labourers are still very few, and the fields are already white for harvest, let us ardently pray the Lord of the harvest that he will speedily furnish an ample supply.

Permit me to add, that there is one part of your letter in particular which affords me the most sincere pleasure; it is that wherein you express your approval of the motives I have invariably urged to enforce the practice of a virtuous and holy life, which we, as Unitarian Christians, derive from our peculiar views of the person and character of our blessed Lord and Master. May we be duly influenced by these motives; and however zealous we may be for the eradication of *erroneous opinions*, and the dissemination of correct doctrinal sentiments, (and we can hardly be too zealous when we behold the formidable phalanx of reputed Orthodoxy which is marshalled in array against us,) let us endeavour to imbibe the amiable spirit and temper of our great Teacher and humbly "trace the steps he trod." And may every day of our sojourning here below find us better prepared for uniting with the ten thousand times ten thousand who will, on the glorious morning of the resurrection, assemble around the throne of the ONE ETERNAL, to adore his matchless perfections and celebrate the abounding riches of his grace throughout the illimitable ages of futurity.

I am, my Christian Friends, with sincere respect,

Your fellow-labourer in the Gospel vineyard,

SILVANUS GIBBS.

*To the Members of the
Unitarian Christian Church, Devonport.*

Negro-Slavery: Speeches of Lord Nugent, at Buckingham, and of Henry Cockburn, Esq., Advocate, at Edinburgh.

WE are almost ready to reproach ourselves for not having brought the crying national sin of Negro-Slavery more frequently before our readers. A reform of this great evil is demanded by every consideration of justice and

humanity and national policy, and, above all, of Christianity. The reproach will not surely lie much longer at our doors. The People are aroused; the Parliament is awake to the enormity; and the Government is, we believe, sincerely disposed to do all that the complex interests involved in the question will permit. We look forward with earnestness to the approaching parliamentary discussions. In the mean time we lay before our readers the two following speeches, which cannot be read without admiration, delivered at public meetings; Lord Nugent's at a meeting of the county of Buckingham, Jan. 17, he himself being in the Chair; and Mr. Cockburn's, at Edinburgh, Feb. 1, the Earl of Roseberry in the Chair.

Lord Nugent's Speech.

His Lordship, in opening the proceedings, said, he should not detain the meeting with any expression of the pleasure and pride he felt at being called to preside where freemen were assembled in the cause of humanity, justice and liberty—in the cause of eight hundred thousand fellow-men and fellow-subjects, deprived of the best gift of God to his creatures—the blessing of personal freedom; of men, engaged in the cause of their country's honour, which was still unredeemed, while one slave or slave-master existed under the shadow of the British flag. Even the Colonial party had begun to relent, and, instead of uncompromising hostility to all change, had adopted a different system, with the motto "gradual abolition." He did not like the phrase. Unprepared and sudden emancipation of a population of beings, whom the crimes of this country had, for centuries, taught to know no law but their masters' word—no government but that of the cart-whip, was not the object of the friends of freedom. The Planters knew it was not; but when *they* said, "gradual," they meant "above all things, and at all events, Mind you do not advance rapidly." When *we*, said his Lordship, say "gradual," we mean, "above all things, and at all events, Mind you advance." (Cheers.) Very important progress had been already made. About four years ago, on a motion of Mr. Wilberforce's, on a day honourable to the House of Commons, and auspicious to mankind, the phrase "ultimate emancipation" was first adopted there; and in 1823, the House of Commons resolved, that it "was anxious for the accomplishment of this purpose at the earliest

period consistent with the well-being of the Slaves and safety of the colonies." That vote no circumstances could ever hereafter reverse or expunge. (Cheers.) The Colonial party asked for compensation. He would vote for compensation to-morrow, but never, never, as a matter of right. Never would he admit the right of one man to plunder another of his natural liberty—his heart was for ever shut against such a claim. England now paid £1,200,000 in increased price of sugars and bounties on export, for the maintenance of Slavery in the West Indies. He would willingly pay that sum directly to redeem 800,000 fellow-subjects from Slavery, and restore them to the right that God had given them, at the moderate price of 17. 5s. per head per annum. (Cheers.) How often have we heard that the condition of the Slave is on the whole preferable to that of the English peasant! Oh, how often is this said, with a degree of gravity, too, which would be very becoming in any proposition a little less monstrously absurd! We see his hard life and scanty means of comfort, and even of existence, in this rigorous season too, and we are told that his condition is harder than the Slave's. Indeed! Then shame on ourselves! Attend to his wants, better his condition, raise him from the misery and degradation to which he is too generally reduced by that bad system called the Poors' Laws. But, in the name of common justice, common humanity, and common sense, use not his sufferings as an apology for the unspeakable horrors of Slavery. At least, if he cannot always find a tender consideration of his necessities, the English peasant can always find redress against barefaced outrage, nor can the hand of created man be raised against him unpunished. (Cheers.) Enjoyments few, comforts few, hardships many and difficult to endure; but rights, God be thanked, intact and intangible; rights which may look the proudest oppressor in the face, and which would wither the hand that would so much as dare to approach them; rights which, if not imperishable, can perish only among the last expiring embers of the English Constitution. (Loud and repeated cheers.) But, Slavery, how can we picture to ourselves?—Scenes such as in this land eye hath not seen, and such as it hath not entered into the heart of freemen but most imperfectly to conceive! We cannot generalise—we must take a single instance. Place the English peasant in his cottage; surround him, like the

Negro, if you will, with every comfort which a better climate and the interested care of a calculating master can afford; surround him with his family. He looks at his wife, the partner only of his bondage; her back, perhaps, striped with the lash, her wrists galled with the fetters, and on her shoulder the burning brand which marks her as the chattel of another; subject, like himself, to the cruel caprice of a slave-driver, to all the violence which unrestrained and irresponsible power never fails to engender in the human mind; subject, perhaps, to worse—to the delicate partialities of her task-master! And these are the domestic reflections of a Slave, until the crack of the thong calls him to labour, and tells him that reflection is not for the Slave. He looks at his children; not the hope and pride of his affections, but children born only to receive from him and drink to the dregs the bitter cup of hereditary degradation—to inherit from him the hateful and hopeless portion of the brand, and the chain, and the cast-whip—a family whom he may love, but whom he can neither cherish nor defend. And this is the condition of 800,000 British subjects. (Cheering.) It is said that Slaves have no feelings to be wounded by this. Then a thousand times cursed be the system which has extinguished such feeling within them! But of this even slavery is not guilty. No; the poor slave can feel as a man, and has feelings which would often put those of more cultivated minds to shame.

“As the stern captive spurns his iron load,
And asks the image back that Heav’n bestowed,
Proud in his eye the fire of nature burns,
And, as the Slave departs, the Man returns!”

(Hear, hear.) I would that those who deny to the poor slave a participation in feelings like our own, who libel the justice of creating Providence and would cancel the charter by which God has given feeling and soul to universal man; I would that they had but heard the testimony on that point as I did, of a slave-master, but one of the kindest of human beings, a gentleman who resided long on his property at St. Vincent’s. He told me, that after a few years’ residence there, finding that the village in which his gang lived was unhealthy and incommodious, he looked about for some better spot to build habitations upon for them. He fixed upon one with all the advantages that situation and good air, and, the inestimable

blessing there, of good water, could give them, and he employed the gang to collect materials for building. One day, as he was superintending his preparations, one of the gang advanced to him as spokesman, and begged he would be kind enough to say what he was making those preparations for. He pointed out the advantages of the site on which they stood, and told them he meant to remove them from the unhealthy swamp in which they were living. Suddenly a strange and universal groan burst from the gang. Divers slaves came up to him in attitudes of sorrow and supplication. They pointed to their village. One said, "Under that tree lies the body of a child I lost in its infancy." Another, "There are buried my parents." A third, "In that village I lived with my wife; I lost her. Do not remove us from that spot." Let Him who alone can try the hearts of man judge between such feelings and those of the majority of the men in whose hands the mortal destinies of these poor creatures are placed; between such feelings and those of the Legislatures of Barbadoes and Jamaica. (Hear, hear.) Why, then, driven to their last hold, the planters take refuge in the very citadel of their cause. They ask us, "Have we not at least an interest in the health of our labourers? And can their health be better secured than by kind treatment? Would any man who values his property abuse or overwork or starve his farm-horse?" Let us for a moment subdue the sentiments of disgust and indignation that spring up to meet such a question; let us forget every claim of right and reason and immortal soul; grant that man is justly given to his fellow-man as a beast of burthen and of toil; and grant that the driver has the same interest and no passions, neither of which, I apprehend, is true; then I turn from the case of the slave of the farm and of the household, to a worse state than either—the jobbing slaves; a class whom it is always the business of the planters to keep out of sight in these discussions; slaves kept by masters who have no land, to let out on jobs to those who have. And I then say that, whatever is the interest of him who works the poor horse in the mill to his last expiring sob, the same precisely is the interest of the master of this jobbing gang. And who is to provide for the jobbing slave, when old age or hopeless infirmity has closed for ever the account of profit between his master and himself? But I turn willingly from these subjects to one which may well inspire us

with hope and confidence in the good work to which we have set our hands. Let us look back to the Slave-Trade debates. It is cheering, at least it is consolatory, to see that the self-same opposition was raised, and nearly the self-same arguments, against the abolition of the Slave Trade, until the very hour when the slave-ships went down with the bloody flag still flying, went down amidst the cheers of a triumphant majority in Parliament and a sympathising people; the Slave Trade, now named only among the foul crimes against which the laws of the land have vindicated those of God and nature; by declaring them felony by statute. The Slave Trade finds no one bold enough now to defend even its memory. And yet, when we hear the Slave Trade reprobated, and Slavery defended by the same persons, I must own I think the Slave Trade unfairly treated. The abuse of defunct Slave Trade is a cheap price for the abettor of living Slavery to pay by way of compromise. But we cannot allow the Colonial party, on these terms, to cry truce with us, by stigmatizing the Slave Trade. There is not one general principle on which the Slave Trade is to be stigmatized, which does not impeach Slavery itself. If Slave Trade is spoliation, the liberty of the man is the spoil, and his fellow-man loses his title to the possession. If Slavery is more to be authorized on one account than any other, it is because it perpetuates, and always must, a Contraband Slave Trade. The Slave Trade-abolition is incomplete, rapine and murder are still carried on, and by English hands too, upon the defenceless shores of Africa, and the murderous horrors of the middle passage still abound, and must abound, while Slavery exists. It is with you, it is with the people of England, now to urge Parliament on to its duty. Great objects are in preparation for next Session. But we must look to your Petitions for support. You have in your cause the gigantic powers of Mr. Brougham, the fascinating eloquence of Sir J. Mackintosh, the indefatigable activity and knowledge of Mr. Buxton and Dr. Lushington, and you have the veteran and honest zeal of Mr. William Smith. I would advert to the invaluable assistance out of Parliament, of one of the most distinguished supporters of this great cause whose name, I trust, we shall be honoured with as a vice-president; but it would be the worst taste in the world of me to speak of him while his son (Mr. Stephen) is at my left hand. (Hear, hear.) I may how-

ever speak (how can we here be silent?) on the venerable and glorious example of his immortal kinsman, Mr. Wilberforce. May the calm evening of his pure and illustrious life be cheered and made truly happy by meeting the final consummation of the great cause with which it is identified. (Cheers.) I glory in the position in which you have just placed me in this society. I only feel shame in the length of time I have trespassed upon you. Yet let me implore, in the name of your country, because of freedom—in the name of justice and of right, because of freedom—in the name of religion—of that Being “whose service” at least “is perfect freedom,” never to relax your efforts until they shall have obtained peace for Africa, liberty for those hundreds of thousands of fellow-subjects who are unrepresented here but by your sympathy; and, though long delayed, the unspeakable glory for your native land, of leading the way, before the Old Nations at least of the earth (some parts of the New World have set us a noble example); in that great blessing for the whole of mankind, the full and entire abolition of Slavery. (This address was received throughout with great applause, which lasted for some time after its conclusion.)

Mr. Cockburn's Speech.

My Lord, I hold in my hand a Petition, which I propose to submit to this meeting, as proper to be adopted; and after what you have heard, I have little more than to say, that it embodies the resolutions which have now been passed, and that from the bottom of my heart, I do most sincerely approve of all that this Society has done—of all that it is now doing—and of the great work which I trust it is yet destined to accomplish. (Applause.) The fact is, my Lord, that we have now come to that stage in the history of this great question at which all doubts as to its material features are removed. I don't say that we have come to the time at which the railer is to be silent, or the selfish man is to avow that he is confuted. [During the meeting a slight opposition was attempted, but when an opportunity was offered to the opponent to speak, he slunk away.] But I do say that we are come to that stage in which no person, without plainly professing to resign his understanding, can say, “I am still a friend of Slavery.” (Immense applause.) About a year or two ago, his majesty's government required the colonial authorities to send to

parliament a statement of what they had done for the amelioration of their slaves. They have sent that statement; and we now see, under their own hand-writing, how true their former statements were—and, if we only knew them by their own accounts, we should judge more candidly of them. We have it on the official reports of the local authorities in the West-Indies themselves; and the essence of these reports is to be found in a book lately published, the name of which you will all observe, for I beg you will all read it for yourselves: it is entitled, “A Picture of Negro Slavery, drawn by the Colonists themselves.” This pamphlet any body may read in the course of about two hours; it consists of about 150 pages, of which I should suppose, upon a guess, not twenty of them are written by any person but the Colonists themselves. These pages contain the *evidence* by the West-Indian planters, why Great Britain should no more interfere. These pages contain the proofs that they are going on perfectly well. Now, my Lord, if there be one person in this room, who has not yet read every page of that *terrible record*, that person has not done—not what charity asks—but what justice demands in behalf of the family of man. (Applause.) Since the commencement of the long annals of human atrocity, I don’t believe that such a picture ever met the human eye. There was an old Italian poet, who had passed through many personal sufferings, and lived in the most troublous era of his country’s history, who was possessed of a fertile and gloomy imagination, and who, with the pen of fiction, sat down to embody in words all the terrible conceptions of his soul. This was a cause to exhaust his genius by supposing his enemies and human criminals placed in an ærial region of his own making, and in assigning to them all the dreadful punishments, all the terrible employments, by which he thought that guilt ought to be visited. It has always been imputed to that genius, that it is in some degree absurd, by the extravagance of his fictitious wretchedness.—Gentlemen, I assure you, upon my personal authority—for I have read the book—that all the horrors of the dark fancy of Dante are exceeded by the actual horrors which pass every day in our own islands upon those whom we have torn from their country to put them there, protected by what we call our laws, shielded by what we term the charity of our religion, sprung from the same origin with ourselves, partakers of the same common nature, destined

to the same immortality. (Great applause.) I repeat, that if there be a person here who has not read that terrible and affecting record, let him go home, and let him not stay till he has got and read it. I repeat the title again: "A Picture of Negro-Slavery, drawn by the Colonists themselves,"—what, in this presence, I could not read one word of; and I know that the hardest heart I addresss, cannot read one page of it without feeling that heart to beat quick; that ere he reads another, his blood will grow cold; and that he will shut the book at last; astonished and confounded at the atrocities which he, by his silence and apathy, should be the means of committing upon those persons. (Applause.) And I trust that no squeamish delicacy will prevent any man or woman who hears me, going through from the beginning to the end of it: you will not spare yourselves the horror and laceration of heart, the sickness which its disgusting details inspire: go on to the end, and then refuse to sign this petition if you can. (Cheers.) The fact is, that contemplating what the Colonists themselves have told us is the improved condition of their slaves, it is to my mind one of the most humiliating pictures of the weakness of our nature that we can speak or hear so coolly of such a subject. We are living in the midst of our personal and domestic comforts; we rise in the morning, and the sun shines on our employments; we close the day in the midst of our pleasures, our business, and our families. But we consider not during these last twenty-four hours, how many of these Slaves have suffered all that tyranny can inflict—all that humanity can endure. We think that because we attend a casual meeting, and sign our name to a petition, we have done enough; and we do no more. And yet we meet every day with the most sensible and amiable persons, possessed with what is called a good heart;—ask them to think of this matter, ask them to come here,—they shake their heads, look grave, and give a few sighs for the sufferings of humanity; but they tell us, that they do not like to interfere,—they return to their own selfish pleasures, wrapt up in the complacency of their own minds; though we tell them that we want no more than the expression of their voice, and that by their silence, they are increasing the miseries of their fellow-creatures. (Applause.) Adam Smith, that most accurate analyser of our moral sympathies, puts this case:—Suppose a man, of what we reckon generous enough feeling, has some little

ailment of his own, some scratch about the edge of his nail, he is as wretched as he can be; and he talks and thinks of nothing else but his scratched nail. Suppose a person were to meet this man, and to tell him, that certain news had been received that the whole empire of China had been swallowed up by a wave, and that three hundred millions of his fellow-creatures had in a moment ceased to live—what does he do?—the case the learned Doctor has put with a perfect knowledge of, but with a severe sarcasm on, our nature.—He will utter some well turned period on the precariousness of mortal life, look sad for a little, walk to the end of the division of a street, and then return to his nail. (Laughter.) Many of us exhibit in our conduct the fancied case put by this profound philosopher. Here are we, an assembly met for the mitigation and gradual abolition of Slavery; and yet, notwithstanding the acknowledged benevolence of our designs, and notwithstanding the respectability of this Meeting, we cannot muster as a society more than five hundred contributors, to the extent of five shillings a year. But even with that small sum, what instruction has not been poured upon the minds of these poor benighted creatures! What shocks have not been given to that system of tyranny by which they are oppressed! The mite multiplied becomes a treasure; and if these mites were poured in from one end of the island to the other, how many thousands might we not save from the worst of possible degradations! Why, then, is it withheld? The truth is, it is the magnitude and enormity of the evil which prevents us from seeing it. If it was only a case of individual suffering, how easily would our sympathies be roused by it! for we could then hear every groan, and see every tear, and mark the quivering of every muscle in our fellow-sufferer. It is when we can follow him through his whole tale of family sufferings, that our sympathies become flattered, and we are all humanity. But, when we attempt to describe the wretchedness endured in distant islands of the ocean, and talk of hundreds, or thousands, or millions of sufferers; then our imagination is baffled by the conception, and we fall back on the generality of our nature, and repose in thought upon the continuance of this evil, as we do upon the continuance of some of those evils in the moral and natural universe, which we cannot account for, and which we know man cannot remove. But could we only see the real circum-

stances of a single slave for a single day—I cannot tell you of them—how different would be our sensations! Imagination cannot conceive, nor words express, what these sufferings are—where every principle of human nature is subverted—where all the extremity of distress is suffered that man can bear, and all the extremity of insolence which power and selfishness can inflict or man sustain—where there is life without the liberty of making the free use of their own limbs—labour without property—families without lawful relations—wrongs without redress—punishment without guilt—minds in which memory can remember no early education, fancy anticipate no era of repose. (Murmurs of applause.)—And yet, with all this, we are cold to the prosperity of this Society; and if our funds were allowed to become exhausted, in the next year, as they were in the last, and if our Petition shall be allowed to go forth without the great and united voice of this place, every observation made will apply to every individual who shall be conscious that he has not done what in him lies to forward the objects of that Petition. I know that it is a common sentiment among many—and it is a very dangerous one, for it encourages apathy—that we ought not to exert ourselves, for we cannot succeed. Many say, “What can we do? This system has lasted a hundred years, and Government has done all that is requisite without our interference; *we* need not disturb ourselves, for *we* cannot succeed.” My Lord, I have no more doubt of the ultimate success of this measure, than I have of any future moral good. There is nothing I anticipate more confidently in this earth, than that the West Indian Islands will yet become the abode, not merely of the English language, but of the principles of the English Government, and of English justice, and also of the principles of the Christian Religion. (Applause.) These islands, favoured with all the bounties of nature, have hitherto been cursed only by the selfishness of man. I will say, that though we were assured we could not succeed, that should not abate one jot our holy ardour in this sacred cause. Success is not to be commanded by men; but, speaking in a certain sense, all is in the power of man while he governs the world. We ought never to fail in using those means by which success may most probably be obtained. Had mankind always despaired in this manner, where would have been the Reformation? Where the English Revolution? (Cheers.) Or where the redemption of this country from the persecution

which Scotland endured a hundred and fifty years ago? (Immense applause.) We should remember, that even if we fail, there is an elevation of sentiment—an independence of character—a consciousness of the desire of usefulness, which renders failure in such a cause a greater delight than ordinary success without a struggle, and for a useless end. (Applause.) Let, therefore, no man imagine he does his duty when he sits down at home, with his hands folded before him, and says, there is a place hemmed in from the regions of the earth by a circle of wretchedness, whose people do not bear the same colour with us: they speak not the same language; there is a little interfusion of water between us; we do not hear their groans; we will not attend to them. Let it be remembered, it is only the person who does his duty, that can look the sun in the face and say, This is not my doing. There is nothing so important in moral life as to connect great principles with great causes; and there is nothing so utterly heartless and contemptible as the mind of that creature, who, wrapt up in his own ease, exclaims, "I sha'n't succeed, and therefore I won't exert myself."

The Learned Gentleman concluded his address amid loud and continued plaudits.

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Milton's Treatise of Christian Doctrine.

Sir,

Clapton, March 26, 1826.

I QUOTED, in your last number (pp. 77—79), from Milton's *Treatise*, his comments on "three passages," justly deemed "the most distinct of all that are brought forward to prove the divinity of the Son." He immediately proceeds further to disabuse the Christian verity, respecting our Lord's dignity, which, in his opinion, the "disputants of the schools" had perverted by arguments which "cast a doubt upon that very unity of God which they pretended to assert." In this view he remarks, that *Immanuel*, though interpreted *God with us*, in "the text, *Matt. i. 23*, does not prove that he whom they were so to call should necessarily be God, but only a messenger from God, according to the song of Zacharias, *Luke i. 68, 69*." The modern learned Trinitarians have, I believe, declined to argue our Lord's deity from his name *Immanuel*. Yet, in Milton's age, the argument from this text, still in frequent popular use, was probably regarded, even by the learned *orthodox*, as of no

small moment. Calvin, in his *Institutes* (xii. 8), had said; as correctly rendered, in the *Translation* 1634, "It behoved that the Son of God should become for us *Inmanuel*, that is, God with us; and that in this sort, that by mutual joining, his Godhead and the nature of man might grow into one another."

On Paul's address to the affrighted Jailer at Philippi, (*Acts* xvi. 31,) *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*, compared with the historian's account of the happy result (ver. 34), *He rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house*, Milton has these remarks: "It does not follow from hence that Christ is God, since the apostles have never distinctly pointed out Christ as the ultimate object of faith; but these are merely the words of the historian, expressing that briefly, which there can be no doubt that the apostles inculcated in a more detailed manner, faith in God the Father through Christ."

The variation in the Greek MSS. of "the passage in *Acts* xx. 28," which Milton next introduces, will be recollected by many of your readers. What I find expressed in the margin of the English N. T., 1591, as the sense of the passage, has been a favourite notion of Trinitarians, that it is "a notable sentence for Christes Godhead: which sheweth plainly in his person, how that by reason of the joyning together of the two natures in his owne person, that which is proper to one, is spoken of the other." Milton, however, understands the words, *with his own blood*, to intend, "with his own Son; for God, properly speaking, has no blood; and no usage is more common than the substitution of the figurative term blood for offspring." Wakefield, in the notes to his "*Translation of the New Testament*," has sustained this, his latest opinion, (in which no man would have been more gratified to have known that he was a follower of Milton,) by several apposite quotations from the Classics. Milton adds, "The Syriac version reads, not *the Church of God*, but *the Church of Christ*; and in our own recent translation it is, *the Church of the Lord*." This last reading, (which has been adopted by Griesbach,) Wakefield, in his *Inquiry* (1784), had ascribed to "the Coptic, a most accurate and valuable translation;" and it appears in his "*New Translation of those Parts only of the New Testament which are wrongly translated in our Common Version. 1789.*" Dr. Sumner has used great diligence, though without success, to as-

certain the English "recent translation" to which Milton has referred.

"Respecting *Rom. ix. 5, Who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen,*" which the *Translation* (1591) renders *God over all, blessed for ever*, and describes in the margin as "a most manifest testimonie of the Godhead and Divinitie of Christ," I cannot easily do justice to the author's argument without quoting the passage entire :

"In the first place, Hilary and Cyprian do not read the word *God* in this passage, nor do some of the other Fathers, if we may believe the authority of Erasmus; who has also shewn that the difference of punctuation may raise a doubt with regard to the true meaning of the passage, namely, whether the clause in question should not rather be understood of the Father than of the Son. But waving these objections, and supposing that the words are spoken of the Son, they have nothing to do with his essence, but only intimate that divine honour is communicated to the Son by the Father, and particularly that he is called God; which has been already fully shewn by other arguments. [See p. 32.] But, they rejoin, the same words which were spoken of the Father, *Rom. i. 25, More than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen,* are here repeated of the Son; therefore the Son is equal to the Father. If there be any force in this reasoning, it will rather prove that the Son is greater than the Father; for according to the ninth chapter, he is *over all*, which however, they remind us, ought to be understood in the same sense as *John iii. 31, 32, He that cometh from above, is above all; he that cometh from heaven is above all.* In these words even the divine nature [of Christ] is clearly implied, and yet *what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth*, which language affirms that he came not of himself, but was sent from the Father, and was obedient to him. It will be answered, that it is only his mediatorial character which is intended. But he never could have become a Mediator, nor could he have been sent from God, or have been obedient to him, unless he had been inferior to God and the Father as to his nature. Therefore, also, after he shall have laid aside his functions as Mediator, whatever may be his greatness, or whatever it may previously have been, he must be subject to God and the Father. Hence he is to be accounted above all, with this reservation, that he is always to be excepted *who did put all things under*

him, 1 Cor. xv. 27, and who consequently is above him under whom he has put all things."

On "1 Tim. iii. 16, God was manifest in the flesh," Milton remarks, from Erasmus, that "the word *God* does not appear in a considerable number of the early copies." Yet he thinks "it will be clear, when the context is duly examined, that the whole passage must be understood of God the Father, in conjunction with the Son. For it is not Christ who is *the great mystery of godliness*, but God the Father in Christ, as appears from Col. ii. 2, and 2 Cor. v. 18, 19." In this view, concluding that "God the Father" was "in Christ through the medium of all those offices of reconciliation which the apostle enumerates," he thus comments on the passage: "*God was manifest in the flesh*, namely, in the Son, his own image; in any other way he was invisible: nor did Christ come to manifest himself, but his Father; John xiv. 9, *Justified in the Spirit*. And who should be thereby justified, if not the Father? *Seen of angels*, inasmuch as they desire to look into this mystery, 1 Pet. i. 12. *Preached unto the Gentiles*, that is, the Father in Christ. *Believed on in the world*. And to whom is faith so applicable as to the Father through Christ? *Received up into glory*, namely, he who was in the Son from the beginning, after reconciliation had been made, returned with the Son into glory, or was received into that supreme glory which he had obtained in the Son." Here the views and language of Milton appear scarcely worthy of his subject. He, however, concludes from the whole, that they who would "establish that the Son is God," (a term of which he has sufficiently discovered his very qualified meaning,) "will in vain attempt to prove from this passage that he is the Supreme God and one with the Father."

On "Titus. ii. 13, *The glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*," Milton does not "deny that Christ is *the great God*, in the sense" which he has so often explained, as not "supreme or essentially one with the Father." Yet he thinks that "here the glory of God the Father may be intended, with which Christ is to be invested on his second advent, Matt. xvi. 27, as Ambrose understands the passage from the analogy of scripture. For the whole force of the proof depends upon the definitive article, which may be inserted or omitted before the two nouns in the Greek without affecting the sense, or the article prefixed to one may be common to both."

Many of your readers cannot fail here to recollect the discussion on this subject, a few years since, which was introduced by Mr. Granville Sharp, and to which his great biblical knowledge and his exemplary Christian piety gave no small reputation. Dr. Sumner refers in a note to Mr. Sharp's "Remarks on the Uses of the Definitive Article," and adds the names of his coadjutors, Dr. Wordsworth, Mr. Boyd and Bishop Middleton. Yet the learned and generally fair and liberal translator appears not to have recollected on this occasion the trite maxim, *audi alteram partem*, for there is no mention whatever of the "Six Letters to Granville Sharp, by Gregory Blunt." On this subject, and on the precarious and insecure dependence upon such niceties of criticism, Milton offers the following important considerations:

"Surely what is proposed to us as an object of belief, especially in a matter involving a primary article of faith, ought not to be an inference forced and extorted from passages relating to an entirely different subject, in which the readings are sometimes various, and the sense doubtful, nor hunted out by careful research from among articles and particles, nor elicited by dint of ingenuity, like the answers of an oracle, from sentences of dark or equivocal meaning, but should be susceptible of abundant proof from the clearest sources. For it is in this that the superiority of the gospel to the law consists; this, and this alone, is consistent with its open simplicity; this is that true light and clearness which we had been taught to expect would be its characteristic."

A reader, desirous of scriptural knowledge, can scarcely bear in mind, from Milton's *Treatise*, any considerations more worthy of his attention than those I have just quoted, and which he proceeds to apply in the further investigation of his important subject. But I have reached, if not exceeded, the due limits of a letter, and must defer to another occasion our author's remarks on a few more passages which had been perverted, according to his maturest judgment, by orthodox comments professing to be *Christian*, yet too often enforced by *Antichristian* restraints on the rights of conscience.

J. T. RUTT.

An April Day.

[From the United States' Literary Gazette.]

WHEN the warm sun, that brings
Seed-time and harvest, has returned again,
'Tis sweet to visit the still wood, where springs
The first flower of the plain.

I love the season well
When forest glades are teeming with bright forms,
Nor dark and many-folded clouds foretell
The coming-in of storms.

From the earth's loosened mould
The sapling draws its sustenance, and thrives :
Though stricken to the heart with winter's cold,
The drooping tree revives.

The softly-warbled song
Comes through the pleasant woods, and coloured wings
Glance quick in the bright sun, that moves along
The forest openings.

And when bright sunset fills
The silver woods with light, the green slope throws
Its shadows in the hollows of the hills
And wide the upland glows.

And when the day is gone,
In the blue lake the sky o'erreaching far
Is hollowed out, and the moon dips her horn,
And twinkles many a star.

Inverted in the tide
Stand the gray rocks, and trembling shadows throw,
And the fair trees look over, side by side,
And see themselves below.

Sweet April!—many a thought
Is wedded unto thee, as hearts are wed ;
Nor shall they fail, till to its autumn brought
Life's golden fruit is shed.

H. W. L.

SIR,

—◆— *Longfellow*
Calvinistic Hell.

THE following is taken from an old book (pp. 20—22, 24—26) entitled " Christian Thoughts for every Day of the Month, with a Prayer : wherein is represented the Nature of unfeigned Repentance and of perfect Love towards God." Printed in 1692, at the Bible in Chancery Lane.

" What a horror should we have of hell if we could hear the lamentable screechings of the damned ! They sigh, they groan, they howl like savage beasts in the midst of flames. They accuse themselves of their sins ; they bewail them ; but 'tis too late. Their tears serve but to

make those fires more fierce in which they ever burn, but never consume. Never to see God; to burn in fire of which ours is but a faint shadow; to endure all sorts of evils at the same time, without any comfort, without any abatement or intermission: to have devils and furies always in our sight, and rage and despair always in our heart. When a damned creature, shedding but *one drop* each age, shall have wept tears enough to make up all the rivers and brooks and seas that are in the world, he shall have advanced no nearer towards an end of his sufferings after so many *millions of years* than if he had begun just now to suffer. And when he shall have *begun* as often as there are sands on the sea-shore, atoms in the air, and leaves in woods and forests, all this at last must be counted for nothing."

INTELLIGENCE.

Account of Laying the Foundation of the Second Unitarian Church at New York, U. S.

[From the New-York Christian Inquirer.]

On Thursday, November 24th last, agreeably to public notice, the corner-stone of the Second Congregational Unitarian Church, corner of Prince and Mercer Streets, in this city, was laid in the presence of six or seven hundred persons, who had assembled to witness the ceremonies. The throne of grace was addressed in a very appropriate and fervent manner by the Rev. William Ware, Pastor of the First Congregational Church, after which the corner-stone was laid, enclosing a brass plate with the following inscription:

The Second Congregational Unitarian Church
in the City of New York;

Erected by Private Subscriptions.

This Stone laid with Religious Ceremonies,
NOVEMBER 24, 1825.

To us there is one God, the Father; and one Lord, Jesus Christ.
1 Cor. viii. 6.

REVERSE.

Asaph Stone,
J. G. Pearson,
Robert Schuyler, } Building Committee.

H. D. Sewall, Treasurer.

Isaac Lucas, Master Builder.

When the stone was laid, the Rev. Mr. Ware addressed the assembly in an animated and impressive manner, and to the sentiments delivered on the occasion, every sincere and liberal Christian will cheerfully add his hearty amen. The day was uncommonly pleasant for the season, and every thing conspired to render the scene peculiarly interesting, and the aspirations

Many hearts ascended to the Giver of all good, that prosperity may attend the undertaking. We are pleased to have it in our power to lay the address before our readers, which should be read with attention by every one who wishes to have a summary of Unitarian belief.

ADDRESS.

It is a good custom, that when about to lay the first stone of a building to be dedicated to God and his worship, we assemble together and ask his blessing on the work, and that to those who are standing around we declare the motives by which we are actuated, and explain the principles of that Christian faith in which we commence so interesting a labour.

We begin, then, the building of this house of prayer that the increasing numbers of those who are believers in the strict unity of God and lovers of real Christian liberty may have a convenient place where they may gather themselves together and unite in the solemnities of social worship—where they may pray to the only God through the only Mediator—where they may hear the doctrine of Christ preached, as they think, in its first simplicity, and where they may be built up together in the knowledge and obedience of the truth as it is in Jesus. With the greater attention that is daily given by Christians of every name to the discovery of truth and the detection of error, and with the increase of our city, it has necessarily happened, that the number of Unitarian believers has greatly multiplied, and that more ample accommodations for religious worship are needed. It is to meet this want that we have begun to lay the foundation of this house of prayer. When, four years ago, the building of the first Congregational Church was commenced in this place, it was little thought that in so short a time the erection of a second would become necessary. But through the blessing of God on the cause of pure Christianity, the most ardent anticipations of those who first entered into this field of honourable labour have been more than answered, and we hope and pray that before an equal period shall have elapsed, through the continued blessing of Heaven, another will have been begun and completed.

To those who stand here, and some of whom may be ignorant of the principles of that Christian faith which we profess, and in behalf of which we begin this church, to them and to all who are here present, I would say, that we lay this stone, the corner-stone of a Christian temple, in the firm and happy belief of one God, the Father, almighty, wise, just, good and merciful, the God of our lives and the God of salvation. Rejecting as the inventions of a benighted age of the church all distinction of persons in the Deity, and all ideas of his character that do not comport with the paternal relation which he sustains to his creatures, we here begin a house where God may be worshiped as the only God, the Father, without equal, without partner, through faith in Jesus Christ, his well-beloved Son, our

Saviour and Redeemer. Believing thus, as we think, on most certain warrant of holy Scripture, we look up with humble confidence for the blessing of Almighty God on our undertaking.

We lay this stone as joyful believers in Jesus Christ, as believers in the *divinity of his mission*, in the supreme authority of his doctrine, in the miracles which he wrought, by the power of God, in confirmation of the truths he uttered; as believers in his prophetic and mediatorial character—that he is the only true prophet of God—that his religion is the only one that has God for its author, and the true happiness of men for its end—that all the commands, precepts, institutions of Jesus, have the force and obligation of divine commands, precepts and institutions—that he is the only appointed medium of approach to God by prayer—that in his name all acceptable worship must be offered up—that the rejection of him is the rejection of God—that they who despise him, despise him who sent him. And we hope that they who believe thus in Christ, will here long enjoy a holy and happy communion through him with the Father of their spirits—that their faith, will here receive new strength—their good principles be confirmed and settled—their virtuous habits established—their devout affections enlivened and purified—that this house will indeed be then the house of God and the gate of heaven.

We lay this stone in a belief of the Christian doctrine of a resurrection from the dead, and of a state of righteous retribution beyond the grave—in the belief that all they who, according to the light they have, lead virtuous and devout lives, shall, through the infinite mercy of God, declared in Jesus Christ, be received to eternal life and joy; and that the unjust—all they who despise the riches of the goodness, forbearance and long-suffering of God, shall be reserved unto the day of judgment to be punished.

We lay this stone as believers in the divine authority of the Sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. We believe these books to contain the whole will of God as it was revealed to the Jews by his prophets, and to the world by Jesus Christ his Son. The Bible is the rule of our faith: its chapters and verses are the articles of our creed—the Bible is the rule of our conduct—the Bible is the charter of our immortal hopes. With this volume open in our hands, and reading as we go, we walk fearlessly through the world; sure that it will guide us right in the midst of duty and trial, and lead us at last to the desired haven. We rejoice in our possession of this blessed book; we thank God for its gift; and it is our fervent and constant prayer that the time may soon come when all men in all parts of the earth shall possess it, understand it and obey it.

We begin this church as practical believers and defenders of the great Protestant principle of the right of private judgment in matters of faith. We yield up our right to understand and interpret the Sacred Scriptures for ourselves, and to believe as we

see evidence to preponderate this way or that, to no man or any number of men, to no Church, or Council, Synod or Assembly. We think we are answerable to God alone for the faith we adopt, or the faith we reject, and that man has no power to meddle in the case. And we trust that from this place no man or woman will be denounced for their faith in Christ, be that faith what it may. And ere one such anathema should be uttered within these walls, we pray they may crumble to their foundations.

We build this church in perfect charity, we hope, with Christendom and the world; for we build it as Christians; and Christians should love not only one another, but mankind. We wish indeed that our own peculiar opinions should every where prevail, for we believe them to be the pure, undoubted truth of God; but we would not make one convert by violence, or the sacrifice of peace. An overheated zeal has been a principal source of the miseries the church has endured. Christian sects have been willing to propagate their opinions at any cost, from mistaken ideas of their importance. They have forced, not followed, Providence. May we avoid their error; and though persuaded that our opinions are true, and important as true, and must ultimately prevail, let us not hasten too fast, but wait the fit concurrence of times and circumstances. God watches over his truth as he does over his material creation, and in his own time, and in his own way, will raise it to honour and universal empire.

And now, brethren—I use the words of another on a similar occasion—let us depart from this spot, from this moment holy ground, set apart henceforth from ordinary uses, and consecrated to things divine. Where the heavens now swell above us, declaring their Maker's glory, shall soon be interposed a roof of human workmanship, beneath which shall be declared the bright glory of his redeeming love. It shall intercept the light of yonder sun, whose beams shall no more fall upon this place, but the more reviving beams of the sun of righteousness shall rest there without a cloud. The dews of night shall come down on this spot no more, and the winds of the ocean shall henceforth be excluded; but the dews of divine grace, as we trust, shall plentifully visit it, and the gentle breathings of the Holy Spirit shall never cease to shed upon it life and peace. And from this place, where now perhaps for the first time the voice of Christian worship has ascended to heaven, there shall go up, generation after generation, to the end of time, incense and a pure offering from multitudes of humble and believing hearts.

CORRESPONDENCE.

We have received the communication of Mr. J. Francis, Brede, Sussex, and will reconsider his former letter.

Though we give in this number half a sheet more than the usual quantity of letter-press, we regret that we are in arrear with some of our correspondents.

THE Christian Reformer.

No. CXXXVI.]

APRIL, 1826.

[Vol. XII.

Dr. Middleton's Remarks on the Story concerning St. John, the Evangelist, and Cerinthus, the Heretic.

[THE long-rejected fable of the apostle John and Cerinthus, at the Bath, has been revived for an intolerant purpose by the Rev. Robert Hall in his funeral sermon for Dr. Ryland. Some animadversions upon this part of the sermon will be found in the last number of the *Monthly Repository* XXI. 176. This new attempt to give currency and credit to the bigoted tale, induces us to reprint the following excellent Dissertation on the story, by the learned Dr. Conyers Middleton, Principal Librarian of the University of Cambridge, from his Works (8vo.) II. 415—436.]

The story which I am going to examine, is told by Irenæus in the following manner: "That there were some who had heard Polycarp relate, how St. John, the disciple of our Lord, going one day to the public bath in Ephesus, and finding the heretic Cerinthus in it, started back instantly without bathing, crying out, Let us run away, lest the bath should fall upon us, while Cerinthus, the enemy of truth, is in it."

This story is applied by Dr. Berriman, in one of his sermons, to enforce the duty of *shunning Infidels and Heretics*: and by Dr. Waterland, to recommend a practice, which he warmly presses upon all Christians, of rejecting from their society and communion, *all the impugnors of fundamentals*: and it is sure to be thrown in our way, either from the pulpit or the press, by all angry divines, as oft as they find occasion, to inflame the people against an antagonist whom, through zeal or heat of controversy, they are disposed to treat as an adversary to the Christian faith.

Since this story then, as it is commonly applied, naturally tends, to excite prejudices and uncharitable aversions in the minds of men, and is considered generally by zealots as an apostolic rule and precedent for the exercise of all kinds of rudeness towards those who differ from them in matters of religion, I cannot but think it of use to the public quiet to inquire into the real state of it, and not to suffer it to have any other credit or influence, than what is

strictly due to it : for in that great uncharitableness which reigns among the sects of Christians in these days, there is no occasion to ransack antiquity for any additional motives of strife and mutual hatred.—I shall consider, therefore,

1st, What objections may reasonably be offered to the truth of it, as well from the nature of the evidence, as the matter of the story itself.

2dly, Shall shew, that though we allow it to be true, it cannot justify the use to which the doctors above-mentioned, and many others, have applied it.

1. As to the evidence of the story, it rests on the single testimony of Irenæus, and that given to us, at second hand only, or from hearsay : for he does not say, that he received it himself from Polycarp, though when young he had seen and conversed with him, but that some of Polycarp's disciples had heard him relate it; of which number there were many, who had conversed with him more familiarly and frequently than Irenæus. Since he received it, then, from certain persons unknown, who received it from Polycarp, who received it from St. John, there is room enough to suppose, that he might possibly be deceived in it : which, considering the character of the man, and of the age wherein he lived, can hardly be thought an unreasonable supposition.

But if we should allow, what many are apt to infer from this passage, that Irenæus meant here to signify that it was he himself who heard the story from Polycarp, we are then to consider what degree of credit may be due to his testimony. But this I have already considered at large in a former treatise ; in which I have shewn, that though of all the fathers whose works now remain to us, he was the most diligent collector of *apostolic traditions*, and had gathered them, as he affirms, *from the mouths of ancient men, who had conversed with the Apostles themselves* ; yet in every single instance of them which he has particularly recorded, and peremptorily attested, he was either deluded himself, or has wilfully deluded others, by a false and forged pretence of apostolic authority. Among many examples which I have here produced in the support of this charge, the following one will sufficiently teach us how far we may depend upon his fidelity.

There were certain Heretics in those days, with whom Irenæus was disputing, who allowed but *one and thirty years* to our Saviour's life, and the *last of them alone* to his

ministry: in contradiction to whom, Irenæus roundly affirms, *that our Saviour actually lived to an old age, and was fifty years old at least at the time of his death:* for which he alleges the unanimous testimony of all the old men who had lived with St. John in Asia, and received this account from him; some of whom, he says, had seen the other Apostles also, and heard the same from them all, and bore witness accordingly to the truth of it. Now it is not possible that any tradition can be more authentically delivered than this, by one of the most venerable bishops of the primitive church, who lived within a few years after the apostles themselves; yet it is certain, as the warmest admirers of antiquity in general, and of Irenæus in particular, must own, that neither St. John, nor any other of the apostles, could ever declare such a story to any one; and that the whole therefore must be a mere fiction, either of those ancient men who had conversed with the apostles, or of Irenæus himself, who pretended to have heard it from them, as being utterly inconsistent with the history of the gospel.

But the gospel was then only in a few hands; and *apostolic tradition* the shortest way of silencing those Heretics; being an argument of the greatest weight with those who believed it, and what could not easily be confuted by those who did not. The pious editor of Irenæus's works makes the following remark upon the place: "Irenæus," says he, "affirms in express words, that Christ continued to teach beyond the fortieth, or even the fiftieth year of his age; which he endeavours to confirm by texts of Scripture, and by reasons also, though weak ones, which the common judgment of the church has rejected. We ought, however; to judge candidly of the blessed martyr, who, *by an impetus of confuting the Heretics*, was carried into the contrary extreme: a case which, as it is manifest, has frequently happened to the most holy and learned men." But since Irenæus's whole life and writings were peculiarly devoted to the confutation of heresy, what is it that the most candid can possibly judge on this occasion, but that the same *impetus of confuting them*, which carried him beyond the truth in one case, would carry him the same length in another, and prompt him to use every argument which could promote so good a cause?

This suspicion will be confirmed, not only by the conduct of Irenæus in other similar cases, but by the matter of the story itself, which on many accounts seems to imp^{be}

a behaviour unworthy of the character of an *Apostle*; to whose dignity it would have been more agreeable, instead of running out of the bath himself, to have driven Cerinthus out before him. *Resist the Devil and he will flee*, is an injunction given to every private Christian: and it is much more the part of an apostle, to resist and disarm an Heretic; whereas so precipitate a flight betrays fear and diffidence, and gives an occasion of triumph to the adversary.

The reason also, said to be given by him for his flight, is childish and superstitious: *lest the bath should fall, because Cerinthus was in it*. As if it had been usual with God, to exert his judgments in that manner on notorious sinners, by burying them under the ruins of walls and houses: a notion which seems to be expressly discouraged and exploded by Christ himself. Or, if there was any cause to apprehend that God would take so extraordinary a method of punishing the heretic, there was a greater still to be assured, that he would provide at the same time, in some way as extraordinary, for the safety of the apostle: it being weak to imagine, that when he had spared the life of so profligate an enemy to that day, he should be in such haste at last to destroy him, as to involve his old and faithful servant in the same ruin.

The conduct of the other apostles towards the professed adversaries of the gospel was quite contrary to this of St. John, as we find it described in the History of their Acts; where we read how Peter rebuked and confounded the prince and leader of all Heretics, Simon Magus, who had bewitched the people of Samaria, by his sorceries, and was revered by them as a Deity. And if any credit be due to ecclesiastical history, we are there told, that when the same Simon, was playing his magical tricks again in Rome, in defiance and opposition to the gospel, and, by the help of his familiar daemons, was flying briskly in the air, St. Peter, by the force of his prayers, brought him down from the sky, with so precipitate a tumble, that he was dashed to pieces by the fall, in the sight of all the people. Thus, when St. Paul likewise was opposed and obstructed in preaching the gospel, by another sorcerer and false prophet, called Elymas, he first reproached him sharply for his diabolical practices, and then, *in the name of the Lord, struck him instantly blind*. And this is the conduct which one would have expected from an apostle, upon an encounter

with Cerinthus, the chief Heretic and adversary of the gospel then living, that he would either have confuted and put him to shame by the force of his reasoning, or confounded him by some act of that extraordinary power with which he was endued from above.

But St. John, as Dr. Waterland declares, *was all love, meekness, and charity*: and this indeed is said to have been his peculiar character, above that of the other apostles. And we are told of him by St. Jerom, "that in his extreme age, when he used to be carried to the church by his disciples, it was his custom to do nothing more than repeat this single exhortation—*My little children, love one another*: and when the people grew tired with hearing nothing else from him but that one precept, and asked, why he continued always to repeat the same thing, he answered, *It is a saying worthy of John, and a precept of our Lord, and if you practise this alone, it is sufficient.*" The same doctrine, of love, charity, and mutual benevolence, was eminently propagated also by his two principal scholars, Ignatius, and Polycarp: *What thanks are due to you*, says Ignatius, *if you love only the good disciples? You must subdue rather the more pestilent sort, by your mildness and gentleness.* And Polycarp, speaking of one who had fallen away from the faith, says, *Be moderate on this occasion, and look not on such as enemies, but call them back, as suffering and erring members.*

How much more amiable then, and agreeably to his proper character, is this same apostle represented in another story, delivered also by the ancients, concerning his painful and affectionate pursuit of the *captain of a band of robbers*; whom he followed into the mountains, and, by his affectionate and paternal remonstrances, brought back from the head of his crew, and restored to the church! yet from this charitable and benevolent act, Dr. Waterland has contrived to draw a most perverse and pernicious inference, *that by flying from the Heretic and running after the Robber, he shewed, how much more he detested heresies, than common immoralities.*

It is observable likewise, that this story is related with no small variation by the ancients themselves. Epiphanius tells it more than once, not of Cerinthus, but of another Heretic, called Ebion: and *why might not both of them*, says the editor of Irenæus, *be found together in the bath at the same time?* Baronius makes the same supposition, to

reconcile the two fathers; while others suppose, that Cerinthus and Ebion are but different names of the same person. Yet Tertullian expressly distinguishes them, and calls Ebion *the successor of Cerinthus*. But Mr. Tillemont solves the matter more judiciously by remarking, that there is no need of such conjectures, because it is common with Epiphanius to make blunders in history; *who has added*, he says, *several other particulars, both trifling and improbable, to this very story*. One of the particulars which he has added, is this—*That St. John had never before made use of the public baths, till he was sent thither on this occasion by a divine inspiration, to give this open testimony of his detestation of heresy*. Some of the other fathers as well as Epiphanius, declare Cerinthus to have been the disciple of Carpocrates, who was not in being, as the chronologers tell us, till after the death of St. John; and if so, this whole story must of course fall to the ground.

The moderns also, in their turn, have added some embellishments to the same story. Fevardentius, in his notes on this passage of Irenæus, says, that St. Jerom, in his treatise against the Luciferians affirms, *that immediately after the retreat of St. John, the bath actually fell down and crushed Cerinthus to death*. Yet there is not the least intimation of any such fact, as Dr. Grabe observes, either in that, or any other part of St. Jerom's works. Another writer with as little truth, asserts the same thing, on the authority of venerable Bede; and some also appeal to Polycarp, as the voucher of it; and all of them take occasion to moralize upon it with great gravity, as an instance of God's judgment upon Heretics.*

* Monsieur Bayle, who mentions this story with all these particulars, makes the following remark upon it: "Observe," says he, "the progress of it. Irenæus was probably the first who published it, and contented himself with relating, barely, what he had heard. But those who came after him, finding his narrative too simple and naked, added some embroidery to it. They fancied it dishonourable to the memory of the apostle to have it believed that he had ever made use of the public baths: they affirmed, therefore, that he had never done it before, and was sent thither on this occasion by the express command of Heaven. It was necessary, in the next place, to find out a good reason for so particular an inspiration: and a reason was presently found; viz. the importance of letting the faithful know what a horror they all ought to conceive against the enemies of the truth; and how the divine justice was always ready to exert itself by some exemplary severity against an arch-heretic. Lastly, as it might

A Hymn.

[From the United States' Literary Gazette.]

THE groves were God's first temples. Ere man learned
 To hew the shaft, and lay the architrave,
 And spread the roof above them,—ere he framed
 The lofty vault, to gather and roll back
 The sound of anthems : in the darkling wood,
 Amidst the cool and silence, he knelt down
 And offered to the Mightiest, solemn thanks
 And supplication. For his simple heart
 Might not resist the sacred influences
 That, from the stilly twilight of the place
 And from the gray old trunks that high in heaven
 Mingled their mossy boughs, and from the sound
 Of the invisible breath that swayed at once
 All their green tops, stole o'er him, and bowed
 His spirit with the thought of boundless power
 And inaccessible majesty. Ah, why
 Should we, in the world's riper years, neglect
 God's ancient sanctuaries, and adore
 Only among the crowd and under roofs
 That our frail hands have raised? Let me at least,
 Here, in the shadow of this aged wood,
 Offer one hymn—thrice happy, if it find
 Acceptance in His ear.

Father, thy hand
 Hath reared these venerable columns, thou
 Didst weave this verdant roof. Thou didst look down
 Upon the naked earth, and forthwith rose
 All these fair ranks of trees. They, in thy sun,
 Budded, and shook their green leaves in thy breeze,
 And shot towards heaven. The century-living crow
 Whose birth was in their tops, grew old and died
 Among their branches, till, at last, they stood,
 As now they stand, massy and tall and dark,
 Fit shrine for humble worshiper to hold
 Communion with his Maker. Here are seen
 No traces of man's pomp or pride ;—no silks

seem indecent for St. John to be thought liable to any vain and unnecessary fear, so it was found convenient to suppose, that the heretic, with whom he refused to bathe himself, was crushed to pieces by the fall of the house." Vide Artic. CBRINTHUS, Note D. in Dictionaire.

Rustle, no jewels shine, nor envious eyes
Encounter ; no fantastic carvings shew
The boast of our vain race to change the form
Of thy fair works. But thou art here—thou fill'st
The solitude. Thou art in the soft winds
That run along the summits of these trees,
In music ;—thou art in the cooler breath,
That, from the inmost darkness of the place,
Comes, scarcely felt ;—the barky trunks, the ground,
The fresh moist ground, are all instinct with thee.
Here is continual worship ;—nature, here,
In the tranquillity that thou dost love,
Enjoys thy presence. Noiselessly around,
From perch to perch, the solitary bird
Passes ; and yon clear spring, that, 'midst its herbs,
Wells softly forth and visits the strong roots
Of half the mighty forest, tells no tale
Of all the good it does. Thou hast not left
Thyself without a witness, in these shades,
Of thy perfections. Grandeur, strength and grace
Are here to speak of thee. This mighty oak—
By whose immoveable stem I stand and seem
Almost annihilated—not a prince,
In all the proud old world beyond the deep,
E'er wore his crown as loftily as he
Wears the green coronal of leaves with which
Thy hand has graced him. Nestled at his root
Is beauty, such as blooms not in the glare
Of the broad sun. That delicate forest flower,
With scented breath, and look so like a smile,
Seems, as it issues from the shapeless mould,
An emanation of the indwelling Life,
A visible token of the upholding Love,
That are the soul of this wide universe.

My heart is awed within me, when I think
Of the great miracle that still goes on,
In silence, round me—the perpetual work
Of thy creation, finished, yet renewed
For ever. Written on thy works I read
The lesson of thy own eternity.
Lo ! all grow old and die—but see, again,
How on the faltering footsteps of decay
Youth presses—every gay and beautiful youth

A Hymn.

In all its beautiful forms. These lofty trees
Wave not less proudly that their ancestors
Moulder beneath them. Oh, there is not lost
One of earth's charms; upon her bosom yet,
After the flight of untold centuries,
The freshness of her far beginning lies,
And yet shall lie. Life mocks the idle hate
Of his arch enemy Death—yea, seats himself
Upon the sepulchre, and blooms and smiles,
And of the triumphs of his ghastly foe
Makes his own nourishment. For he came forth
From thine own bosom, and shall have no end.

There have been holy men who hid themselves
Deep in the woody wilderness, and gave
Their lives to thought and prayer, till they outlived
The generation born with them, nor seemed
Less aged than the hoary trees and rocks
Around them;—and there have been holy men
Who deemed it were not well to pass life thus.
But let me often to these solitudes
Retire, and in thy presence treasure
My feeble virtue. Here its enemies,
The passions, at thy plainer footsteps shrink
And tremble and are still. Oh God! when thou
Dost scare the world with tempests, sett'st on fire
The heavens with falling thunderbolts, or fill'st
With all the waters of the firmament
The swift dark whirlwind that uproots the woods
And drowns the villages; when, at thy call,
Uprises the great deep and throws himself
Upon the continent and overwhelms
Its cities—who forgets not, at the sight
Of these tremendous tokens of thy power,
His pride, and lays his strifes and follies by?
Oh, from these sterner aspects of thy face
Spare me and mine, nor let us need the wrath
Of the mad unchained elements to teach
Who rules them. Be it ours to meditate
In these calm shades thy milder majesty,
And, to the beautiful order of thy works,
Learn to conform the order of our lives.

Bryant

Wm. Cullen Bryant

The Question "What think ye of Christ?" answered by a Unitarian. A Discourse delivered in Devonport, on Sunday Evening, February 12, 1826.

SIR, *Devonport, February 13, 1826.*

THE following discourse was delivered last evening in the lecture room of the late Literary and Philosophical Society in this town, (which is now used on Sundays for Unitarian Christian worship,) in consequence of a pamphlet recently published by the Rev. Doctor Hawker, of Plymouth, bearing the following title: "*What think ye of Christ?*" The great Question of the Gospel, as proposed to his Disciples by Christ himself, Matt. xxii. 42; and when opened and explained by the Lord to the *spiritual* Understanding of the *Lord's People*, an infallible Security against all the *Heresies* of the present CHRIST-DESPISING GENERATION. The subject humbly contemplated, in a Salutation to the *Spiritual Church* of our MOST GLOBIOUS CHRIST; on the Entrance of the New Year of our LORD GOD, 1826." If the discourse be admissible into the Christian Reformer, its early insertion will oblige the friends of Unitarianism who were present at the delivery.

I confess I am unable to comprehend the worthy Doctor's meaning in some parts of his work; and he seems to have anticipated as much in regard to many of his readers, for he thus concludes: "Through grace I never suffer myself to lose sight of his oneness, in all that constitutes GODHEAD, with JEHOVAH in his Trinity of Persons. And in all my approaches to the mercy-seat, I approach to the one undivided JEHOVAH, through the mediation of CHRIST, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the GODHEAD bodily. And as the GODHEAD of the HOLY THREE in ONE, is alike inaccessible, the mediation of CHRIST as CHRIST (that is, God and man in one person) is as necessary to the approach of the divine nature of the SON, as that of the FATHER, or of the HOLY GHOST. This may be considered a *solecism* in the world's vocabulary; but the word loseth its meaning when applied to the glorious truths of God: there are no solecisms in scripture. The LORD enableth his scripture church to receive the LORD's manifestations spiritually. And then, while carrying about with us this charter of grace, the precious question of our most glorious LORD, put by himself, and opened by himself, in all its beauty and fulness, will be like an anchor to the soul, in the darkest night of heresy, silencing all the blasts of a

CHRIST-despising generation.—What think ye of **CHRIST**?
This is a fair specimen of the gifted author's style; but I question Mr. Editor, whether you can understand his meaning much better than

SILVANUS GIBBS.

Matt. xxii. 42: "*What think ye of Christ?*"

THIS, my friends, is an important question; but it has been variously answered by different persons. Some have said that Christ was an angelic or super-angelic spirit who descended from the celestial regions, and, uniting with the man Jesus, enabled him to perform all his wonderful works; others, that he was created by God out of nothing for the purpose of being used by him as an instrument in the formation of the material universe; that he afterwards animated the body of Jesus, and enabled it to effect, by its sufferings and death, the recovery of man from the effects of the fall, and that by his energy the universe is now sustained;—others, that he was produced by the Father from eternity, deriving his existence in a manner different from and superior to all other beings, and that he is equal to the Father in all things, except necessary existence;—others, that he is one of the three co-equal persons who compose the Godhead;—and others, that he is himself the One Eternal Jehovah!

These opinions, you will readily admit, cannot be *all* true. To my apprehension they are all false, and some of them grossly absurd. Let me, therefore, solicit your candid and serious attention this evening, while, as a Unitarian Christian, I briefly state my own views of the person of Christ; and however different they may be from those entertained by others, I trust they will be found, on careful examination, to be supported by the dictates of common sense and the testimony of the sacred Scriptures.

To the question, then, "*What think ye of Christ?*" I reply, in the first place, That he was the *long-predicted Messiah*.

Every one who carefully studies the New Testament, must perceive that Jesus Christ was the very person whose advent was foretold by the ancient Jewish Prophets. To the prophecies he and his apostles continually appealed in proof of his divine mission. "Search the Scriptures," said he, "for they testify of me." "Had ye believed Moses ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me." After

his resurrection, it is related of him, that when conversing with two of his disciples, on the road to Emmaus, he "explained to them from Moses and all the Prophets, in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself." Paul reasoned with the Jews at Thessalonica out of the Scriptures, "explaining them, and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and have risen again from the dead;" and that this Jesus whom he preached "is the Christ."

In the 18th chap. of Deuteronomy we read, "And the Lord said unto me, (i. e. to Moses,) I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I command him: and it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken to my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." This prophecy is expressly applied to Jesus Christ by the apostle Peter, in the 3rd chap. of Acts. But the most remarkable prophecy is that contained in the 52nd and 53rd chapters of Isaiah, which Philip, when he went to preach the gospel to the Ethiopian nobleman, found him reading in his chariot; and from which he preached to him the glad tidings of Jesus.

That Jesus Christ was a divinely-commissioned teacher, is also evident from the *miracles* which he wrought. The declaration of Nicodemus is perfectly correct: "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher *come from God*: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except *God be with him*." The miracles of Jesus, my friends, were "not done in a corner;" they were subject to the closest examination, and were acknowledged even by his most bitter enemies. They, however, instead of allowing, with Nicodemus, that his miracles were produced by divine power, absurdly and ignorantly charged our Lord with being a messenger acting under the dominion of Beelzebub, the supposed prince of demons. But we are satisfied that this personage never had an existence, and that the whole system of demonology is entirely fabulous; the miracles of Jesus, therefore, afford *decisive evidence* that his mission was divine; and not only that he *acted*, but that he also *taught* by the *power of God*, his heavenly Father. "My doctrine," said Jesus, "is not *mine*, but *HIS* that *sent me*." "The FATHER who *sent me*, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak." "The works which MY FATHER hath *given* me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me,

that THE FATHER hath sent me." "I seek not mine own will, but the will of THE FATHER who hath sent me." "My meat is to do the will of HIM that sent me, and to finish HIS work."

It is then manifest, from the predictions of the Jewish prophets, from the miracles which he wrought by the power of God, and from his own declarations, that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, the anointed, the sent of God: but if God anointed and sent him for the purpose of executing his will, in the recovery of mankind from error, sin and death, he could not be himself God: the anointed must be a person wholly distinct from the Anointer—the sent from the Sender.

2. "What think ye of Christ?" That he was a man, a proper human being. It is evident that the apostles were of this opinion, for they never once addressed him as God, but uniformly as one of the human race. There is not a person in this assembly who could possibly have conversed so familiarly with the Supreme Being, as the apostles and first disciples conversed with their revered Master. They invariably treated him as a man; indeed, they occasionally went so far as to expostulate with and rebuke him; and when he was apprehended as an enemy to his country, "they all forsook him and fled;" but never in one instance did they treat him as JEHOVAH, their Creator and Governor. Can any of you, my friends, conceive it credible, that they would expostulate with and rebuke the ALMIGHTY to his face; or that they would desert him, when under the pressure of the most accumulated difficulties? Impossible!

Nor did they, after the resurrection of Jesus, ever entertain a different opinion of his person. The two disciples, when on the road to Emmaus, did not say to the supposed stranger, they had entertained the opinion that Jesus of Nazareth was God, but a PROPHET mighty in deed and in word before God and all the people; and that they "trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel;" i. e. delivered their nation from the Roman yoke, and made them a great and independent people; and though they subsequently formed more correct views of the spiritual nature of the Messiah's kingdom, they did not alter their opinion of his proper humanity.

Our Lord's own language clearly shews that he considered his heavenly Father as a being entirely distinct from himself, and that he was inferior and subordinate to him. "No man," says he, "taketh my life from me, but I lay it

down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." But was this power *inherently* his own? Certainly not; for he thus closes the sentence: "This commandment *have I received of MY FATHER.*" "This," says he, "is life eternal, that they might know THEE, the ONLY TRUE GOD, and Jesus Christ whom THOU hast sent." "As the Father gave me commandment, even so I do." "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as *I have kept MY FATHER'S commandments*, and abide in his love." "All things that I have heard of MY FATHER, I have made known unto you." "Whatsoever ye shall ask THE FATHER in my name, HE will give it you." "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels which are in heaven, *neither the Son, but THE FATHER.*" "To sit on my right hand and on my left, *is not mine to give*; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared by MY FATHER."

If then there were things which Jesus did not possess, if there were future events the time of the fulfilment of which he was ignorant, if all that he had was given to him, and if the Father, to whom he prayed, was the only true God, Jesus must necessarily have been a distinct being, inferior to his Father and subordinate to him: and he himself positively declared, "My Father is *greater* than I." How can any person, therefore, with these plain passages before him in the New Testament, presume to assert that he and his Father are *one being*, and that he is *equal* to his Father in power and dignity?

Does not *prayer*, let me ask, imply *dependence* and *want*? But on whom can the SUPREME BEING be dependent? Or in what circumstances can he be placed to render the aid of another being necessary? We find, however, that Jesus prayed to God with as much humility and resignation as any of his followers, which he never would have done were he himself God. Why should one God pray to another God if they were both equal? Or why should God pray to himself? Or why should one-third of the Godhead pray to one of the other thirds, omitting entirely the remaining third? Or if it be said it was the *human nature* only of Jesus that prayed, why did it not pray to the divine nature with which (according to the popular creed) it was so intimately united? The very idea of Jesus *praying* to his Father destroys their supposed equality. When the Saviour was overwhelmed with afflict-

tion in the garden of Gethsemane, we are informed that "there appeared an *angel* unto him from heaven, *strengthening* him." But surely, my friends, GOD ALMIGHTY could not need the support, advice and consolation of an angel; nor could HE "in whom we live and move and have our being," suffer agony and distress! If we suppose this, we **DETHRONE** him, and make the **GREAT ETERNAL** "such a one as *ourselves*."

In all the prophecies relating to the Messiah, he is uniformly spoken of as *a man*. His history by the four evangelists is the history of *a man* who acted under a divine commission. In all the sermons delivered by the apostles, they spoke of their Master as a *proper human being*: indeed their testimony, as recorded in the book of Acts, relates entirely to *a man* whom God raised from the dead and exalted to dominion and glory. Peter told his countrymen that Jesus of Nazareth was "*a man* approved of God, by miracles and wonders and signs which *God did* by him;" that "*this Jesus hath God raised up*;" and that "*God hath made that same Jesus* whom they had crucified both Lord and Christ." Paul told the people of Antioch, (speaking of David,) that "*of this man's seed* hath God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus." "And," said he, "be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through **THIS MAN** is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." When addressing the Athenians, he informed them that "God hath appointed a day in the which **HE** will judge the world in righteousness, *by that man* whom **HE** hath ordained." In fact, though the Acts of the Apostles contains a history of the Christian Church for about thirty years, there is not a single word or even a hint given in it respecting Jesus Christ being God. Now, my friends, is not this truly astonishing if the doctrine of the Trinity be true? Had Luke (the supposed author of this history) been a Trinitarian, it is impossible that he could have thus written: he would undoubtedly, as other Trinitarian historians have since done, have made every thing bend to the support of his favourite system.

The plain, literal language of the apostles in their epistles, also, is entirely in favour of Unitarianism, for they write concerning their exalted Master as having been a divinely-commissioned *human being*.

Paul tells the Romans that Jesus "*was made* of the *seed of David*;" that he "*was raised* from the dead by

the glory of the *Father*;" that those who believe "that *God* hath raised him from the dead shall be saved." The same eminent Apostle declares to the Corinthians, that "*Christ is God's*," and that "*the head of Christ is God*." To the Galatians he says, "When the fulness of the time was come, *God sent forth* his Son, made of a woman." To the Ephesians, that *God* "*put* all things under his feet, and *gave* him to be head over all things to his Church." To the Philippians, that "*God* hath highly *exalted* him, and *given* him a name which is above every name;" and that "every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord—TO THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER." To the Colossians, that "*it pleased the Father* that in Christ should all fulness dwell;" and that he "*now sitteth on the right hand of God*." And to Timothy, that "there is ONE GOD and one Mediator between God and men, THE MAN Christ Jesus." The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says, that "*in all things it behoved Jesus* to be made *like unto his brethren*." Peter declares that "*God* raised him up from the dead, and *gave him glory*, that your *faith* and *hope* might be in *God*;" and "that *God* in all things may be glorified, *through Jesus Christ*." And John says, "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come *in the flesh*, (i. e. a *proper man*,) is not of *God*." The Apocalypse is styled "*the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him*." In this book Jesus repeatedly designates his Father, my God; he also affirms that he *received* power from *his Father*; and that he is set down with his Father in *his* throne. Wherever Christ is here introduced, he is spoken of as a *man*; and indeed throughout the Scriptures, every thing ascribed to him is consistent with his *proper humanity*.

It may be farther observed, in addition to this powerful Scripture evidence, that the *great body* of Christians, for the first two hundred years and upwards, were, in the strictest sense, believers in the proper humanity of Christ, or, in other words, they were *Unitarians*: I hesitate not, therefore, to maintain, with the fullest assurance, that our blessed Lord and Saviour was truly a *man* commissioned by God; and consequently, that Unitarianism is supported by the strongest proof that can possibly be adduced.

(To be concluded in the next Number.)

Anecdote of the late John Wesley.

SIR,

Chatham, March 14, 1826.

THE following was communicated to me some years back by a pious gentleman, who received it immediately from *Miss Perronet* herself; its authenticity may therefore be safely asserted, while it adds another to the sum of *Anecdote relative to the late Rev. John Wesley.*

The celebrated John Wesley, being once on a visit at the vicarage house of the late Rev. Vincent Perronet, of Shoreham, in Kent, a clergyman of congenial sentiments with the founder of Methodism, was asked by the daughter of the latter, what was his opinion of Dr. Watts on the Pre-existence of Christ, which he [Mr. W.] had been recently reading: to which he gave answer, That having perused to a certain portion of the work, he threw the book away from him, adding, Had I proceeded further I should have become AN ARIAN.

On this retrograde effect of the Doctor's argument on the mind of Mr. Wesley, I had intended making some observations, but considering such conduct has coupled with it its own comment, I therefore subjoin no more.

T. C. A.

Langlands, Baron of Wilton.

(From Wilson's History of Hawick.)

AN adventure of no ordinary description is related of one of the ancestors of this feudal chief. In the dark ages, ere John Knox had promulgated his doctrines of Reform, which overthrew the power and mummery of the Roman priesthood in Scotland, the laird of the Barony of Wilton went to loggerheads with mother Church.

The Baron's lands paid tithe to the Abbey of Melrose. An account of this kind had been due by his honour for some time, which he refused to pay, on the plea of an overcharge; and at length a monk was despatched from Melrose to wait upon him, and to get matters settled without farther delay. The clerical messenger, on the morning after he had reached Hawick, was taking a walk previous to calling at the Mansion-house; and, about a mile from the town, near Heap, met the refractory debtor of the

Church. The Baron was not unknown to the priest, and the latter "doffed his cowl." Unaccustomed to meet a clergyman at so early an hour, Langlands halted, and on the common frivolities at meeting being offered and received, he seemed disposed to talk. The monk took this opportunity of making him acquainted with the object of his mission. The Baron knit his brows, and looked down, while the Churchman, having committed himself, proceeded. Though the passions of the Baron were gathering into wrath, yet he was able to suppress them for a time, and the priest went on. His honour had been repeatedly dunned for this arrear of tithes, part of which he conceived to be a villanous charge; and at length, in a stern tone, stopped the monk by exclaiming, "Who and what are you, Sir?" The clergyman assumed his dignity in turn, and replied, "I am a son of the Church, commissioned to demand a debt due to her by the Baron of Wilton." "You may be the son of perdition for any thing I know," rejoined the angry Baron, and walked away. Things having come to this crisis, the descendant of Melchizedek was not to be so easily defeated; he dogged Langlands for a few yards, and reiterated his claim. The chieftain turned round, and touched the hilt of his sword. The representative of the successor of St. Peter was not to be intimidated; for, deeming his personal safety secure in the sacredness of his office, he mustered a goodly share of courage, and placing himself on the Baron's front, said, "I am the Abbot of Melrose himself, know your honour, come to claim my own; and, in name of the Church, I must inform you, that it will be well for the barony of Wilton if the tithes due on the estate are paid to me before I leave Hawick." His feudal lordship, who perhaps had never been so bearded in his life, in a momentary paroxysm of rage drew his heavy two-handed sword from its scabbard, and laid the unfortunate Abbot at his feet, "shorter by the head."

Langlands walked moodily homewards; and, before he entered the gateway of his castle, he had become sensible of the perilous plight in which his rash action had placed him. He had "done the deed," however, and how was the fatal error of a frantic moment to be retrieved?

After having attempted to take breakfast, he dressed himself in courtly style, mounted the best horse in his

stables, and set off post for Edinburgh, to sue for mercy from his King.

The news of the death of their chief soon reached the inmates of Melrose Abbey, and the religious coterie made the arches of that gothic fabric ring during thirty days with howling and lamentation. The Baron was subsequently denounced from every pulpit throughout the land, and the vengeance of the Church was accumulating to effect the destruction of the murderer. In the mean time, a monument, in the form of a cross, was erected where the Abbot fell, that in latter times was known by the name of "Heap Cross," the remains of which have been seen by a number of the people of Hawick who are still living.

While the priesthood were preparing to launch their fiery anathemas against Langlands, he was busied in intercessions at Court for means to ward off his impending fate. Douglas, of Drumlanrig and Hawick, was at that time a favourite with the King, as well as on friendly terms with his neighbour baron. The latter communicated to his friend the insult he had offered to the Church, at the same time concealing the death of the Abbot, but urging him to use his influence with the King to procure a pardon without delay; seeing, that when the power of the Church was to be combated, perhaps the Sovereign might hesitate to interpose his authority. Drumlanrig accordingly soon procured an audience of the Monarch. His Majesty was in high humour and spirits when he received the two Teviotdale barons at Holyrood; and Drumlanrig proceeded to business. "Please your Majesty, this is James Langlands of that ilk, and Baron of the Barony of Wilton, than whom your Majesty has not a more faithful and loyal subject. He has had a quarrel with the Church, and has some reason to guard himself against its consequences, and therefore prays most humbly that your Majesty will afford him protection, seeing that his enemies are both numerous and strong." The King having heard of the transaction in a former conference with Douglas, shook his head and smiled. "So you knocked off the bonnet of a dignitary of the Church with your sword, Langlands?" "I did in an unlucky moment, please your Majesty." "And you have thereby stirred up the evil spirit and power of the priesthood?" "It is even so, my liege." "What had the Abbot done to provoke you?" "He was insolent and unreasonable in demanding payment of tithes, my Sove-

reign." "And for the indignity offered to the clerical order you crave my protection from their wrath?" "Most humbly, please your Majesty." "I grant it freely," said the King; "and my friend Drumlanrig will see that the pardon is drawn out in proper form; as your opponents are both wily and powerful." So far all was well, and Drumlanrig and his friend took their leave of his Majesty, and proceeded to the office of the Secretary of State, where they found the minister at his desk. Drumlanrig, after having communicated to the Secretary the purport of his visit, and the King's commands thereon, retired. Langlands and the minister being left alone, the latter commenced writing out the pardon; and as he approached that clause in the document where the priest's bonnet had to be introduced, the Baron slipped a purse of gold upon the table. The pen of the functionary halted for a few seconds, his eyes being drawn as by a magnet to the shining tempters that peeped through the meshes of the netted silk, and good-humouredly asked the meaning of appearances. "You will oblige me much," said Langlands, "and probably save an ancient family from ruin, if you will put the monk's head into the bonnet." The silent eloquence of the *douceur* on the table could not be resisted, and the happy chief returned to his friend with the pardon in his pocket.

The Baron having procured the sign-manual of his Majesty to the instrument, in due form, now inquired at Langlands why he evinced so much anxiety on a subject apparently deserving of so little. "In gude sooth, Drumlanrig, I must now tell ye, that in striking off the priest's bonnet his head went with it." Drumlanrig was astonished, yet felt gratified in having relieved his companion from such a scrape; and Langlands returned home rejoicing in his success.

The King had a party in the evening at Holyrood, and Langlands' errand at court was whispered round the table; but his Majesty had not yet been informed of the real state of the case. On his demanding a toast from Drumlanrig, however, the *dénouement* followed. "May your Majesty's enemies," said the Baron, "all lose their bonnets like the priest of Melrose." "And what great harm would that do to them?" asked the King. "Please your Majesty, when Langlands struck off the bonnet of the priest, the poor man's head was in it."

The pardon which the offender had obtained on this oc-

casion was equally calculated to alarm and irritate the priesthood, and although the Monarch enjoyed the joke along with his courtiers, and felt no way disposed to resent the trick that had been played upon him, yet he soon began to discover that by pardoning an act of such hostility to a powerful body, he had placed himself rather in awkward circumstances; but, fortunately for the credit of the Government, an incident came to the recollection of the King that seemed well suited for laying the ground-work of a propitiatory offering to the dangerous grumbling of the clergy. The Archbishop of St. Andrew's had for some time past pressed his Majesty repeatedly for an additional grant to the Church, though without effect; it now occurred to the King that the request of his Grace might be acceded to, on condition that the ecclesiastical murmuring raised throughout the kingdom on account of the Abbot's death should be silenced. The terms of reconciliation being propounded to the Archbishop by royal authority, through the medium of Drumlanrig, an agreement was immediately made; and a national thanksgiving to God for a magnificent Sovereign, took place of seditious wailing for the murdered monk.

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Congregational Collections among Unitarians.

SIR,

Chatham, March 25, 1826,

I AUGUR no small success to the Unitarian cause from the recently-formed British and Foreign Association instituted expressly for this purpose. The Committee will, no doubt, adopt every means that may be effective for augmenting its funds, which it must be obvious will require to be ample in proportion to the extent of objects to be embraced. There is, however, one procedure which I beg leave (if not considered stepping out of my province) through the medium of your Miscellany to recommend, *the more especially* as I believe it has never been attended to except at our Metropolitan Meeting. What I allude to is, that in addition to individual donations and subscriptions, there be congregational collections *

* Since writing the above, I have seen the British and Foreign Unitarian Association Address, where such an adoption is advised, not *annually* but *triennially*. With all deference to those to whom the business of management is confided, I ask why the latter should be considered a more eligible mode, and for what reasons it can be so ascertained?

throughout our connexion, a custom among us in other respects by no means novel or nugatory. I would therefore advise that a few weeks prior to the General Assembly in each year, there be circulars sent to the different churches, urging the propriety, and it may be *necessity*, of the measure. Circumstances must dictate and decide as to the season most convenient for the purpose, but if one specific Lord's-day could be appointed alike in every place, it would be seen in what degree a simultaneous effort of common feeling would facilitate the desirable pecuniary supplies. These might further derive strength if the officiating minister would at the same time more particularly deliver a discourse on our distinguishing doctrines, which, if previously known, would, in all probability, lead to an increased attendance, and be followed by equal advantage. Its utility would at least appear, in this instance, were it only to evince that we are as zealously concerned for the spread of what we deem Christian truth as our brethren of other denominations, and so remove the stigma of ours being an inert, by shewing it to be an influential, faith.

T. C. A.

On the Epistle to the Romans.

[A Letter to a Young Friend.]

You say that you find a great difficulty in understanding the New Testament, and especially the Epistles, and of all the Epistles that to the Romans. You also inform me, that many have advised you not to concern yourself about these parts of the Scriptures, but confine yourself to those which are more plain; such as the discourses of our Lord and the Gospels in general, which, together with the Acts of the Apostles, will afford you a sufficient knowledge of Christian doctrine, for all the purposes of life and godliness, without perplexing your mind with abstruse questions, such as the learned have never been able to decide. You inform me also, that others have advised you differently, and wishing you to gain some knowledge of the epistolary parts of the New Testament, they have put into your hands Mr. Locke's rules for reading the Epistles, and have mentioned some commentaries, which you cannot obtain a sight of. As I feel deeply interested in your success as an inquirer after truth, and in the success of every one circumstanced and disposed as you are, I shall not hesitate to give you my

opinion, beseeching you to make that use of it which you would always make of the assistance of one who wishes you well, desires to be your adviser, but presumes not to be your oracle.

And, first, let me reply to each of your particulars in order; and secondly, I will proceed to present you with a brief analysis of the Epistle to the Romans, proceeding, if it be agreeable, to that of the other Epistles in succession.

That you should be perplexed to find out the meaning of some passages of Scripture, I do not wonder, seeing your case is common with that of all Christians, learned and unlearned, rational and fanatic. But that you should find greater difficulties in the Epistles than in other parts, I am somewhat surprised. It is true, the Apostle Peter observes, that there is something hard to be understood in Paul's Epistles, but in which he does not say, and I apprehend there are as great difficulties in any of his Epistles as in that to the Romans. Certainly the advocates of absolute and unconditional election pretend to find that doctrine asserted in this Epistle, but they also pretend to find it in other Epistles, as well as in the Old Testament, the Gospels, and all the prophets and apostles. Nor do I recollect that any doctrine whatever is pretended to be taught in this Epistle more or more clearly than in other parts of the Scriptures. Can you understand every expression and allusion in our Lord's discourses? Are there no hard sayings that lead you to exclaim with his disciples, Who can hear them? The advocates for the Trinity, Deity of Christ, vicarious sacrifice, original sin, &c., and I may add, the advocates for transubstantiation, do not pretend to derive these doctrines from the Epistles chiefly, but rather from the Gospels and the very words of our Lord. So that I see no reason why these Epistles should perplex your mind more than any other portion of Scripture.

I am aware that many have thought as you do, and of this number are those who have advised you to confine your attention to the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, as containing more comprehensive and useful doctrine, and sufficient for all the purposes of religious instruction. Some have gone so far as to say that it would have been better if the Epistles had never been written, at least, if they had not been preserved, as they only tend to perplex and cause divisions rather than edifying. This sentiment is not a very devout one. Nor is any other consistent

with pure Christianity but that which views these parts of the Scriptures as it views the other parts. The authority of an apostle of Christ rests on the same basis as the authority of Christ himself. *He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.* He (Paul) is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. The mission of Paul was attested by miracles, so that if there be any error in his doctrine, either by discourse or by epistle, that error is chargeable to him that sent this Apostle. Nor can better lessons on Christian conduct, or purer principles, or weightier reasons, or safer directions, be found any where than in the Epistles of Paul, and especially in this to the Romans. It has been misunderstood by ignorance, perverted by bigotry, tortured by sectarian bias, sublimated by enthusiasm, precipitated by philosophy, and spurned at by scepticism. The Apostle commences with the depravity of man in the first chapter, reproves spiritual pride in the second, and proves the judgment of God to be according to truth; states the grounds and nature of faith in the next, proceeds to the end of the eleventh, where he brings you by legitimate steps to behold him from whom and through whom and to whom are all things; and then exhorts and beseeches you by the mercy of that God to present your body a living sacrifice to God as your reasonable service; and finishes with a succession of the most pure, exalted and amiable principles, that are evidently the fruit of the tree of life. I feel greatly astonished at the objections brought against this Epistle by many Christians, learned and unlearned. Read the twelfth, fourteenth and fifteenth chapters; nothing can be more practical and plain.

With respect to Mr. Locke's rules for reading the Epistles, much as I admire the man and his works in general, I really have no faith in his method for understanding these Epistles. I cannot see that any general rules can be laid down as forming a key to these or any other epistolary correspondence. Letters are written under such a variety of circumstances and for so many different purposes, that no common rule can be laid down by which to read them with uniform advantage. One letter may be written in answer to another, and it may be that a perusal of the original letter may be necessary in order to ascertain the allusions of the answer, as well as their meaning. It may be of

a private nature about business, and then no one could understand it fully but the individual or individuals to whom it is addressed. Or it may be of a public nature, and the essential key to its meaning is a knowledge of the public affairs of that particular time and place in which it was written. It is not, I presume, necessary to pursue these remarks farther, which might be continued *ad infinitum*. How then shall we apply any of these rules to the Epistles of Paul to any of the churches; especially to that of the Romans? Does the Epistle itself bear any marks of a temporary, particular or local nature? In my humble opinion it is as remote from any such circumstance as possible. The facts to which the Apostle alludes are of a general nature. Indeed, he takes the widest range whether he be descanting upon historical, moral, divine or human conduct. Upon this principle, if I recollect right, Dr. Taylor founded his key to the Romans, the best instrument ever yet produced for opening the sense of this portion of apostolical instruction. But to justify my remarks as to the general nature of this Epistle, let me call your attention to certain expressions contained in it, and to the fact of certain others being absent.

Respecting the latter circumstance, I cannot find a single expression in this Epistle that supposes the Apostle to have had a view to any local circumstances in the Church at Rome. All that has been said about a Jew of some eminence being a member of that church, that he aimed at pre-eminence among the members, that the Apostle particularly alluded to him in chapter ii., as one that taught others and was himself in need of a teacher, as transgressing the precepts he taught others, and as guilty of practices similar to those he condemned in others, I confess I cannot see any better ground for than pure imagination, nor is there any advantage in the supposition. It is certainly very common for all teachers to speak as if addressing themselves to some particular individual, when they are conveying the most general instruction. When our Lord says, Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup or platter, &c., he does not mean some particular Pharisee, but any Pharisee, or all the Pharisees. Or if he meant some particular Pharisee, it would then be of little advantage to us if we knew what particular Pharisee he meant, his name, place of abode, &c. You will observe in the Epistle to the Corinthians certain expressions refer-

ring to circumstances of a local nature, and the same may be said of the one to the Galatians; but in this to the Romans there is not an allusion to any principle or practice or fact of any kind, but what is of the most general nature. There might be Judaizing Christians at Rome; there were such at Antioch, in Galatia, and probably in all places. Were there those who taught others and had need of teaching themselves? This is but too common a circumstance every where. Were the Roman Christians persecuted? Persecution was the common lot of all who in these times dared to profess the gospel of Christ. For these reasons there is no proof arising from any expressions in this Epistle that it was, or contained any thing, of a local nature, or that it was written in answer to some questions which had been previously put to the Apostle, or that any criterion is necessary to understand its contents, but a knowledge of human nature, of the Christian religion, of the history of Abraham and the Mosaic dispensation; or, in other words, a knowledge of the other Scriptures. But it contains expressions of a general nature, and its allusions are often to general principles and practices. It is evident that the Apostle speaks in a general way in the first verse of the second chapter when he says, "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art." Except there were strong external evidence to prove that this address was to some particular individual no one would understand it so. It is evidently an address to any man whatever, who may sustain a similar character. The Apostle alludes to general principles, chap. i. ver. 20, et seq., to the end of the chapter; in the second, throughout, if the above remark on verse 1 be just; in the third, to verse 9, as is very plain; and then he proceeds to shew, that there was no difference between Jew and Gentile, and can have no particular person in view, nor any practice that was confined to Rome. In short, I feel convinced that I might go through the whole Epistle with the same remarks, as it appears to me so very manifest; so that nothing can be more far-fetched than any construction which supposes references to any thing of a local or temporary nature; except in chap. xvi. respecting salutations, &c.

Considering this to be the case, it follows, that the best way to obtain a knowledge of this Epistle is to read and gain an understanding of the Scriptures in general, the state of the world at the commencement of Christianity.

the principles of human nature, and the doctrines of the gospel, the advantage of which I shall hereafter proceed to evince.

I. C.

The Voice of Spring. By Mrs. HEMANS.

I COME, I come! ye have call'd me long,
I come o'er the mountains with light and song!
Ye may trace my step o'er the wak'ning earth,
By the winds which tell of the violet's birth,
By the primrose-stars in the shadowy grass,
By the green leaves op'ning as I pass.

I have breathed on the south, and the chesnut flowers
By thousands have burst from the forest-bowers,
And the ancient graves, and the fallen fanes,
Are veiled with wreaths on Italian plains;
—But it is not for me in my hour of bloom,
To speak of the ruin or the tomb!

I have looked o'er the hills of the stormy north,
And the larch has hung all his tassels forth,
The fisher is out on the sunny sea,
And the rein-deer bounds o'er the pastures free,
And the pine has a tinge of softer green,
And the moss looks bright where my foot hath been.

I have sent through the wood-path a glowing sigh,
And call'd out each voice of the deep blue sky;
From the night-bird's lay through the starry time,
In the groves of the soft Hesperian clime,
To the swan's wild note by the Iceland lakes,
When the dark fir-branch into verdure breaks.

From the streams and founts I have loosed the chain,
They are sweeping on to the silvery main,
They are flashing down from the mountain brows,
They are flinging spray o'er the forest-boughs,
They are bursting fresh from their sparry caves,
And the earth resounds with the joy of waves!

Come forth, O ye children of gladness, come!
Where the violets lie, may now be your home;
Ye of the rose-lip and dew-bright eye,
And the bounding footstep, to meet me fly!
With the lyre and the wreath, and the joyous lay,
Come forth to the sunshine, I may not stay.

Away from the dwellings of care-worn men,
The waters are sparkling in grove and glen !
Away from the chamber and sullen hearth,
The young leaves are dancing in breezy mirth !
Their light stems thrill to the wild-wood strains,
And youth is abroad in my green domains.

But ye—ye are changed since ye met me last !
There is something bright from your features pass'd ;
There is that come over your brow and eye,
Which speaks of a world where the flowers must die !
—Ye smile, but your smile hath a dimness yet—
Oh ! what have you looked on since last we met ?

Ye are changed, ye are changed !—and I see not here
All whom I saw in the vanished year !
There were graceful heads, with their ringlets bright,
Which tossed in the breeze with a play of light,
There were eyes, in whose glistening laughter lay
No faint remembrance of dark decay !

There were steps that flew o'er the cowslip's head,
As if for a banquet all earth were spread ;
There were voices that rang through the sapphire sky,
And had not a sound of mortality !
Are they gone ? Is their mirth from the mountain passed ?
—Ye have looked on death since ye saw me last !

I know whence the shadow comes o'er you now,
Ye have strewn the dust on the sunny brow !
Ye have given the lovely to earth's embrace,
She hath taken the fairest of beauty's race,
With their laughing eyes and their festal crown ;
They are gone from amongst you in silence down !

They are gone from amongst you, the young and fair,
Ye have lost the gleam of their shining hair !
—But I know of a land where there falls no blight,
I shall find them there, with their eyes of light !
Where death 'midst the bloom of the morn may dwell,
I tarry no longer—farewell, farewell !

The Summer is coming, on soft winds borne,
Ye may press the grape, ye may bind the corn !
For me, I depart to a brighter shore ;
Ye are marked by care, ye are mine no more.
I go where the loved who have left you dwell,
And the flowers are not death's—fare ye well, farewell !

Queries on Church Government.

SEVERAL persons, anxious for the permanent prosperity of the Unitarian cause, wish for information, through the medium of the Christian Reformer, as to the best plans for constituting and regulating religious societies, and beg leave to ask,

Is a Unitarian congregation merely an assemblage of persons individually subscribing to a course of lectures on divinity, as they might in another place to a course of lectures on philosophy or elocution, the reputation or talent of the lecturer being the only point of attraction? Or should there be something to bind each member to the others?

Is it prudent to leave the management in the hands of minister and trustees; or has a committee been found by experience to be useful? How should such a committee be appointed? By acclamation or by ballot? By minister and trustees proposing a double list, for members to scratch from? Or by what other means?

Who should be admitted to vote? The mixed assemblage who are usually denominated a congregation, or persons only who contribute a certain amount, and who have continued to do so for a specified time?

If Mr. Wright's engagements afford him leisure, and he think the subject of sufficient importance, the proposers of these queries would be thankful if he would communicate the result of his information and experience; and if other persons will do so likewise, it may perhaps be of some utility to our cause generally.

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Deism and Christianity; Voltaire and Paine.

[From the New-York "Christian Inquirer."]

It is not a little amusing to observe the compliment which is sometimes passed, undesignedly of course, on Christianity by the Deistical writer. Even the gifted Paine,* with all his virulence, avows his creed to contain

* As Paine is frequently calumniated by persons who are unacquainted with his works and ignorant of his talents, the writer of the present paper would not have it understood that he uses his name with any kind of invidiousness. On the contrary, he feels all the respect for him, as a political writer, to which his works have the most indisputable claim, and he feels perfectly convinced, that when his theological works are forgotten, he will be enrolled among the benefactors of mankind, as having done more towards the simplification of civil and political government than any other writer.

the leading doctrines of Christianity, although, perhaps, from having viewed Christianity through the medium of corruption, he was unconscious of it. Paine says in his *Age of Reason*, "I believe in one God, and no more, and I *hope*" (how superior the Christian system, which completely ascertains the fact!) "for happiness beyond this life. I believe the equality of man, and I believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavouring to make our fellow-creatures happy." Precisely the doctrines of Christianity, Mr. Paine; the wheat which has long been growing with the tares, but which you have not been able to discriminate in your ardour of theological warfare. And similar to this is a passage in Voltaire's *Philosophical Dictionary*, on which this paper is principally designed to comment. The passage is his fifth question on religion, and although it is designed, according to his sneering manner, to depreciate the pretensions of Christianity, like the passage which is already quoted from Paine, it reflects lustre on the religion of Jesus. "Next to our holy religion," (says he, mistaking, like Paine and most other Deistical writers, the established religion of his day for Christianity,) "to be sure the only good religion, which would be the least bad? Would it not be the most simple? Would it not be that which taught a great deal of morality and few doctrines; that which tended to make men virtuous without making them fools; that which did not impose the belief of things impossible, contradictory, injurious to the Deity, and pernicious to mankind; and which did not take on itself to threaten with eternal punishments all who had common sense? Would it not be that which did not support its articles by executioners, and deluge the earth with blood for unintelligible sophisms?" "Would it not be that which taught only the adoration of one God, justice, forbearance and humanity?" Now, as it is very evident that this passage is a sneer at Christianity throughout, and that Voltaire designed it to be understood that Christianity was quite distinct from that religion which he would have considered as the least bad, or rather, as his meaning is, the very best, is it not complimentary to the Christian system, as the Christian system possesses all the excellencies of his "least bad" religion; and may not Voltaire be considered, in this passage, as an apologist for that system of religion which he misunderstood, and consequently rejected? For had Voltaire understood Christianity, had

he viewed it as contained in the New Testament, instead of as exhibited by monkery and priestcraft, he would not only have found that it was the "least bad," but that it was the best of all conceivable systems. He would have found that it was the most simple; that it taught a great deal of morality and few doctrines; that it tended to make men virtuous without making them fools; that it did not impose the belief of things impossible, contradictory, injurious to the Deity, and pernicious to mankind; that it did not take on itself to threaten with eternal punishment all who had common sense; that it did not support its articles by executioners, and deluge the earth with blood for unintelligible sophisms; that it taught the adoration of one God, (of one God only,) and justice, forbearance and humanity. That such might have been Voltaire's discovery had he lived in our day, is not improbable; but if it had not, the fault would have been his own, the error would not have been in Christianity. And for the purpose of shewing this, I shall offer a few strictures on the Christian system, in reference to Voltaire's features of the least bad religion. Christianity, then, I shall primarily observe, is the most simple religion; it is founded on the being of one God, who is powerful, wise, just, and benevolent; it is free from all subtle doctrines and scholastic terms; it has neither priests, nor temples, nor ceremonies, and is adapted to the multitude, the ignorant, and the unlearned. Jesus Christ came into the world commissioned by his heavenly Father to preach the doctrine of a final resurrection, and a state of future reward and punishment. He worked miracles to prove his divine mission; he exhibited the God of nature as the Parent of the human race; he exhorted men to repent and reform; and, finally, he was put to death, and raised from the grave, according to his own prediction, as a pledge to us that we should be raised, even as he had been. And if this be not a simple religion, the most simple that the mind can conceive, religion and simplicity must ever be distinct. But when Jesus taught, we read that the common people heard him gladly, for he spake as one having authority, and not as the scribes; that is, Jesus addressed himself to the hearts and understandings of his hearers by the simplicity of his doctrines, while the scribes were superstitious and dogmatizing, preserving the traditions of men. Jesus, likewise, taught few doctrines, but a great deal of morality. Morality, indeed, was his object,

and doctrines were only taught by him as subserving to morality. The doctrines of Jesus were not abstract and subtle, astonishing the vulgar and confounding the wise, but they were rather leading principles upon which the whole fabric of morals stands. Doctrines, as prescribed by synods and churches, are merely the objects of assent and belief; but the doctrines of Christianity are of vital importance, and are a kind of moral cement to the temple of virtue. And thus the leading doctrines of Christianity, in guarding the Divine unity, in exhibiting the Divine goodness, in proclaiming human responsibility, and in asserting a future state of retributive justice, furnish principles of action, operating on our hopes and fears, which are of the most beneficial tendency. But while the doctrines of Christianity are clearly defined in the Christian Scriptures, they are not proclaimed as the tests by which the future condition of man is to be determined; they are important as supplying principles of action, as motives to virtue, but it is to virtue only that reward is promised, and to vice only that punishment is threatened. The New-Testament threat is not, Depart from me, ye disbelievers of doctrines, but "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity." And thus, as there is nothing absurd or ridiculous in these views, but as, on the contrary, they are quite consonant to the best convictions of the mind and deductions of philosophy, and as, if I may be allowed the term, they are a complete condensation of the Christian system, it is quite clear that Christianity is calculated to make men virtuous without making them fools, and that it does not impose the belief of things impossible, contradictory, injurious to the Deity, and pernicious to mankind, and which does not take on itself to threaten with eternal punishments all who have common sense. And again, as Christianity has no "unintelligible sophisms," nor yet "articles," it is quite impossible that it should arm the executioner, or deluge the earth with blood for their defence. But as Christianity teaches us to love our neighbours as ourselves, to do unto others as we would have others do unto us, to render mercy in order that we may obtain mercy, to visit the sick, to succour the fatherless, and to aid the widow, to worship God who is a spirit in spirit and in truth, and to be perfect even as our Father who is in heaven is perfect, it is clear and evident that the Christian system teaches "the adoration of one God, justice, forbearance, and humanity."

INTELLIGENCE.

British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

THE Anniversary of this Institution will be held on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday in Whitsun week, the 16th, 17th and 18th of May.

On Tuesday evening the General Committee will meet the Deputies of District Associations at the rooms in Walbrook Buildings at Six o'clock.

On Wednesday morning the General Meeting for Business will be held at Finsbury Chapel, to which Individual Subscribers, Deputies of District Associations, Representatives of Congregations and Honorary Members are respectfully invited.

On the evening of the same day a Sermon will be preached in Finsbury Chapel by the Rev. LANT CARPENTER, LL.D., of Bristol, in aid of the funds of the Association: divine service to commence at half-past Six o'clock.

On Thursday morning a second Sermon will be preached, also in aid of the funds of the Association, by the Rev. JAMES TAYLER, of Nottingham: divine service to commence at Twelve o'clock.

After this service, the subscribers and their friends will dine together at the *Crown and Anchor* Tavern, in the Strand.

[For further particulars, see the Wrapper.]

Anniversary of Moor Lane Chapel, Bolton.

[From the *Bolton Chronicle*, April 1.]

THE Fourth Anniversary of the Friends of Free Inquiry, was held on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday last, at the Meeting-house in Moor Lane. The Rev. W. J. Bakewell, of Chester, preached in the morning and afternoon of Sunday, and the Rev. J. G. Robberds, of Manchester, in the evenings of Sunday and Monday; on which occasions, collections were made towards defraying the expense incurred by erecting the School Rooms and Vestries adjoining the Meeting-house. On Monday at one o'clock, the annual dinner took place, of which upwards of 120 persons partook. The Rev. W. SHEPHERD, of Liverpool, officiated as Chairman, and Mr. JOSHUA CROOK, Vice-President. After the cloth was removed, the Rev. President observed, that those who were that day assembled, had been designated, by many able and eloquent characters, as a class of men wrapped in darkness. It was true that they had not the benefit of the *imposition* of hands by the bishops, which he verily believed to be one of the grossest *impositions* that ever existed. The Aristocracy of the country had seized upon the riches of the Church; and aggrandized the members of their own families and connexions; and ministers were thus forced upon the country, in contempt, as *Burke* would say, of the opinions and dispositions of

the respective congregations. The choice of all ministers of Christianity should be invested in the people; and those who contributed the smallest mite towards the spread of the Gospel, ought to have a vote in all the temporal concerns of the church of which they were members. The first toast he had to propose was, "The true source of all power—the People."

The PRESIDENT then made a few observations upon the free discussion allowed in the Christian Church, until the union took place between Church and State; which caused all the evils complained of by so many religious bodies. Thus, in consequence of this union, the Papal power had been carried to such an extent, that no one was allowed to promulgate his opinions, unless they were in conformity with the decision of Popes, Kings, Councils and Priests. At the Reformation, though a mighty accession of religious liberty and illumination of mind had occurred, yet this unnatural union being perpetuated, the successors of Popery in the emoluments of the Church, and the patronage of the State, cast an odium on free discussion. When the members of the Church of England were adducing arguments to oppose the Roman Catholic claims, the principal objection alleged against the latter was, that they deprecated discussion and the rights of conscience. But how did these very Churchmen act at the Universities? They told the students to read the Bible, and to think for themselves; but when they came to be ordained, they were compelled to subscribe to the 39 Articles, and were most emphatically and peremptorily exhorted not to teach any other doctrines than what were contained in those articles. If they neglected this advice, expulsion from the bosom of the Church was the consequence. It reminded him of a certain connoisseur of painting, who invited a friend to look at a fine picture, which he said was one of Raphael's; on his friend expressing some little hesitation, he said, "If you say that it is not Raphael's, I'll knock you down; nevertheless, let me have your candid opinion."—(Much laughter and applause.)—Every man ought to judge for himself in religious matters, and it was contrary to reason or justice that he should be persecuted for the avowal of any set of opinions.

"The unalienable birth-right of man—unlimited freedom of discussion, and may no daring mortal, mounting the Throne of God, presume to direct the lightnings of Heaven."

After many liberal sentiments had been proposed, the VICE-PRESIDENT gave—"The man who through good and through evil report, has dared to be at his post—the consistent advocate of truth—the philanthropist and scholar, whose exertions have been constant in the cause of the great family of man—*our worthy Chairman*, the Rev. WILLIAM SHEPHERD." It is impossible to describe the enthusiasm with which this toast was received.

The Rev. Wm. SHEPHERD attributed the compliments which

they had paid him, more to their partiality, than to any merit on his part, and he sincerely thanked them for their warm expressions of kindness and approbation. He trusted he might say without vanity, that whenever civil and religious liberty had been called into question, he was found at his post (cheers). He was probably indebted to incidents which had occurred to him in early life, for the sentiments he now held, and for the conduct he had pursued. When a boy, he was sent to a school, where he was the only Dissenter amongst the scholars, and his uncle was the only man in the place who was opposed to the American war. Consequently he (Mr. Shepherd) was abused and scouted by all his school-fellows as a Presbyterian rebel. He was glad of it; for it made him firm and resolute in the cause of truth; and it led him to inquire early, and caused him to embrace the opinions he now professed. He was not sorry for what he had done; for he had lived to see in this kingdom and the world at large, men whom it was an honour to resemble, do many things which he himself had advocated from a child. He had seen the United States of America assert their liberty, and establish a Republican Government; he had seen liberty transplanted from that country into France, which she now enjoyed, since the Revolution, under a limited monarchy, instead of a despotic Government. He had seen the blacks in St. Domingo obtain their manumission; and whatever might be said in the House of Commons by Messrs Buxton, Wilberforce, or Canning, *he looked to St. Domingo as the cloud whence the lightning shall blast and annihilate slavery and oppression!* He had seen the South American States break the chains of their oppressors, and assert the rights of free-born men. In England, a great revolution had taken place in the minds of men since 1792 and 3. At that time it was not safe for a man of liberal sentiments to walk the streets. He had been *pelled in the streets of Bolton, as a Presbyterian and a Jacobin;* (much laughter) but now he could walk in perfect safety, and the improvement in liberal principles was so great, that if a Public Meeting were called in the Town, upon a subject of civil or religious liberty, he believed the majority would be found in its favour. Manchester was also much improved. They had lately a Petition for Parliamentary Reform, which, some years since, would have been thought to have threatened the overthrow of Church and State. Many persons, in consequence of publicly maintaining their opinions, had on different occasions suffered severely in their lives and property. He was happy, however, to say of himself, that, excepting the pelting in the streets of the good town of Bolton, he had suffered no personal inconvenience. He would recommend all, at their outset in life, to acquire decision of character, and strength of principle; for when their opponents saw them firm and undaunted, they would be less inclined to meddle with them. They would soon learn to their cost, that if they struck hard, they would be struck hard.

in return. In his own neighbourhood, he had the pleasure of living upon good terms with his opponents—he had lately foraged in the enemies' camp, and found it better furnished than our own. He was very sanguine in the cause for which they then met; and whilst his strength remained, his exertions should not cease. He, however, found his strength gradually declining; but contrary to the experience of many, with him it revived at the proceedings of such meetings as the present. It was a source of continual pleasure for him to know, that when his exertions should be withdrawn by the resistless hand of time, his place would be supplied by persons better calculated than himself to advance the great cause. Mr. Shepherd concluded by saying, that he was compelled to leave the Chair immediately, as his necessary avocations called him away from the Town.

At the conclusion of the Meeting, a hymn was sung and a prayer delivered, and the assembly retired to meet again at the Moor-Lane Chapel.

On Tuesday, about 100 of the Sunday-school scholars, with their teachers, sat down to dinner. When the cloth was removed, the President, the Rev. ROBERT CREE, of Preston, proposed the following sentiment, which he prefaced with a few observations—"Success to the cause of the general Education of the Poor."—The children were then addressed by Mr. MAKIN, Mr. FINCH, of Liverpool, and Mr. HAYWOOD, the superintendent; in the course of which, the object and tendency of Sunday-schools were dwelt upon, and the children exhorted to pursue that course of life most acceptable to their Creator, by emulating every virtuous action, and by being kind and charitable to each other, and consistent in their conduct as rational creatures. Mr. Cree eulogized in high terms Mechanics' Institutions, and proposed a toast, wishing them success. After which, a hymn was sung, a benediction given by the Chairman, and the Meeting broke up.

The Annual Meeting of the *Unitarian Congregations of Rochdale, Newchurch in Rossendale, Todmorden, Padiham, &c.*, will be held this year in Rochdale, on Friday in Whitsun week. The Rev. Noah Jones, of Todmorden, and the Rev. J. Beard, of Green-gate, Salford, have promised to preach on the occasion. Services will commence at 10 o'clock in the Morning and at 6 in the Evening. There will be a dinner provided at the Wellington Inn for the Friends of the Association, price 1s. 9d.

JAMES TAYLOR.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Communications have been received from Messrs. Latham, Ketley, and Cundill; and from R. J. P.; J. C.; J. M.; and A. H. Mr. Wright's second Letter to the Unitarians in the North-East District, in the next Number.

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MAY, 1826.

[Vol. XII.]

*Letters from the Rev. R. Wright, to the Unitarians in
the North-east District.*

LETTER II.

Trowbridge, April 11, 1826.

MY CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

IN reminding you of the things which you have been taught, and attempting to excite you to an increase of zeal and to persevering exertions in the great cause of pure and primitive Christianity, it appears to me essentially, and above all things, necessary to call your attention, in the first place, to what relates to yourselves individually, to the state of your minds, your own spirit and conduct, and the progress each of you is making in the good ways of God. The Apostolic exhortation, "Look to yourselves," is highly important, but too much neglected. It is easy for persons to see defects and failings in others; they are ready enough to censure the faults of their brethren, and can complain of the want of zeal and exertion in those around them; but, alas! they are too apt to forget themselves, to overlook their own failings and defects, to palliate their own faults, and increase the general want of zeal and exertion by their own lukewarmness and indifference. It ought ever to be kept in view that Christianity is a personal and spiritual religion, that it relates to men as individuals, has its seat in the understanding and the heart, and extends to the whole character and conduct. There can be no true and genuine Christianity actually existing in life and practice, any further than individuals become real Christians, by understanding the gospel, abiding under its influence, and obeying it from the heart. There can be no zeal in the cause of Christ, any further than individuals become zealous; nor any exertions to promote it any further than individuals exert themselves, either singly or unitedly. Christian churches being aggregates of individual Christians, there can be no more information, or piety, or virtue, or love, or zeal, in any church, than the individuals who compose it possess and bring into it. The want of knowledge, purity and zeal, in any church, must arise

from the deficiency of the individuals who are its members in knowledge, purity, and zeal. It follows from these considerations, that the way to remove the evils which exist in churches, is by effecting the reformation and improvement of the individuals who compose them; and that for such individuals to become zealous, and rouse themselves to more exertion, is the way to produce an increase of zeal and exertion in the churches. It is useless for any of you, my brethren, to lament the defects, the lukewarmness and indifference, and the want of zeal and proper exertions which exist in any of your churches, if you do not use all the means in your power to remove these evils: and in doing this you must begin with yourselves. If there be a beam in thine own eye, thou must first cast it out before thou canst hope to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye; thou must reform what is amiss in thyself, before thou canst hope for success in attempting the reformation of others. If you be deficient in zeal, and neglect to make the exertions in the great cause which you are capable of making, how can you complain of the want of zeal and exertion in others? By becoming more zealous, and increasing your exertions, you will not only add to the zeal already existing in your churches, and the exertions already made; you will stimulate the zeal and exertions of others by your example, and help to kindle and vivify the sacred flame, which may spread from breast to breast, until a holy ardour in the glorious cause is felt throughout your churches.

It can hardly be expected that persons should feel much interest, or be inspired with much zeal, in the holy cause of genuine Christianity, unless they clearly understand it, are deeply impressed with its value and importance, live under its influence, and experience its happy effects. The tree must be made good before the fruit will be good. The heart must be right with God; the mind must be imbued with the principles and spirit of the gospel; a devout frame must be produced, and an habitual regard to God excited, in order to a steady flame of enlightened zeal being raised, which will be tempered by charity and guided by knowledge, and will produce those benevolent and unwearied exertions in the cause of truth and righteousness which will do honour to religion, glorify God, and enlighten and bless mankind. It is only as, by the diligent use of all Christian means, and by carefully watching over yourselves,

you are preserved from the pollutions of the world, from sensuality and vice, and continue habitually pious, and under the holy influence of the doctrines you profess, that you can be expected to remain lively Christians, and zealous in the cause of pure religion.

On the grounds already stated, let me, my brethren, exhort you to look to yourselves individually, to examine the state of your own minds, and to consider your ways.

1. Are you continuing steadfast and diligent in your attention to the word of life; seeking daily to attain the further knowledge of it, to have it dwelling in you richly, and to abide under its influence? It is by this word that you are to live as Christians; this is the flesh of Christ which you are to eat, that you may live by the faith of the Son of God. As it is a source of life to you, it is to be a principle of life and action in you, and the rule by which you are to live. If you are neglecting this word, letting it slip from your minds, (figuratively speaking) ceasing to feed on it daily, no marvel that you become barren and unfruitful, that your zeal declines, and your love waxes cold. If unhappily this be the case, O! look back to the time when you received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, when you regarded the doctrine you profess as a pearl of great price, and rejoiced in the knowledge of it. Let your attention to divine truth be excited afresh, still seek to increase in the knowledge of it, meditate upon it daily; it will still quicken your souls, and give you joy and strength.

2. Are you cherishing a sense of the high authority and inestimable value of the sacred word, as it came from God; is the word of your salvation, and the record of eternal life; and seeking to have your faith strengthened by a frequent recurrence to the evidences of the divine origin and truth of the gospel? If through neglecting this, you suffer your faith to be weakened, and sceptical thoughts and feelings to steal upon you, the interest you feel in Christianity will be diminished, and your zeal will be lost in supineness; and O! consider how great will be your loss of comfort and of moral strength!

3. Are your hearts right with God? Do you enjoy peace with him through our Lord Jesus Christ? Do you love God supremely? Is it your delight to worship and serve him? Is it your ardent desire to know and do his righteous will? Are you conscious of your uprightness in

his sight, and of your desire in all things to please him? If your heart be not right with God, but estranged from him; if other objects be supreme in your affections, and you be not upright before him; no wonder that you cease to feel zeal in his cause; but O! consider how awful is your state, and the account you will have to give of yourselves to him hereafter. May you turn to him with all your hearts.

4. Are you setting God always before you, and acknowledging him in all your ways? Do you cherish and live under a sense of the Divine presence, viewing the hand of God in all the events and occurrences of your lives, putting your whole confidence in him, and cheerfully resigning yourselves to his will? Do you cultivate a devotional frame of mind, and seek to have your thoughts raised to God, and your hearts lifted up to him, with pious affections, on all occasions? If such be your state, you cannot be cold-hearted and indifferent in the cause of God and truth.

5. Are you attentive to the private instrumental duties of religion, such as reading, meditation, prayer, and thanksgiving, self-examination, the keeping of your hearts with all diligence, watching over the door of your mouths, and pondering the path of your feet? A steady and persevering attention to these things will make you exemplary Christians, and prepare you to be useful in whatever sphere you are called to act, and will render you the better qualified to promote the edification of the church, and the cause of true religion. The neglect of these things may lead to lukewarmness in the Christian profession.

6. Are you cultivating the spirit of Christ, the mind which was in him, his disposition? It is in this spirit that every thing in Christianity must be done, and that his cause must be promoted. If you act in a different spirit, you will dishonour him, and injure his cause, rather than promote it, whatever may be your views and intentions.

7. Are you living according to the gospel? You can neither be edified, nor edify others, nor promote the cause of pure and undefiled religion, any further than you live according to the gospel.

This letter, my Brethren, is designed to remind you of instructions which I gave you in days that are past, and to impress on your minds what is essential to the revival and prosperity of the good cause among you; for it can be

revived only so far as the good work is revived in you as individuals, and be made to prosper only as your souls prosper in what is truly Christian.

The brief remarks here made, are submitted to your consideration, and I beg of you to give them your most serious attention. Ever faithfully and affectionately, yours, &c.

R. WRIGHT.

History honest with regard to Deceased Princes.

THE adulation and homage with which kings are approached and spoken of in their life-time, make us blush for human nature and feel the degradation of our species. But Death, sometimes styled the great Leveller, is also the great Reformer. Dead kings are immediately consigned to History, which deals faithfully with them, and in this, as in many other respects, the proverb is verified that "Truth is the Daughter of Time."

Living princes often shew that they are not insensible to their posthumous responsibility. Were they more mindful of the judgment of survivors, they would be more careful of their momentous duties; but it is not easy to calculate how much worse they would be, had they no foresight of the trial which, like the Egyptian monarchs, they are doomed to undergo, as soon as the breath is out of their bodies, before the bar of Public Opinion.

This train of thought has been suggested by the perusal of the following remarks in the *Times* newspaper of March 21, on the recent death of John VI., King of Portugal, and Emperor (by courtesy) of Brazil. Distance of place has nearly the same influence, in dispelling prejudice as distance of time; and the criticism of an English newspaper on the character of a deceased Portuguese sovereign, may be pronounced equivalent to the judgment of History.

"He appears to have been a Prince of small attainments ingrafted on mean endowments, and therefore with nothing intellectual or moral to distinguish him from the herd of crowned instruments, who remain passive amidst mighty changes, and are used like so many notched sticks, whereon we register the vicissitudes of nations. The chief animal propensity of the defunct Emperor and King, was one in which the demise of Louis XVIII. of France, left his Most Faithful Majesty without a rival in Christendom—so exclusive, but so remarkable, was the energy of his royal

stomach. An interest, however, which never could have been associated with the name or character of John VI., while living, his death has excited for the kingdom over which he nominally ruled."

◆

Dr. Middleton's Remarks on the Story concerning St. John, the Evangelist, and Cerinthus, the Heretic.

[Concluded from p. 138.]

FROM these remarks upon the story, I shall proceed to the lesson which is drawn from it by the two Doctors above-mentioned, and shew,

2ndly, That though we allow the fact to be true, it will not justify the use to which they have applied it.

Now the constant use which is made of this story, is to demonstrate the duty of *shunning and affronting Heretics; of denying them the common offices of civility; treating them as persons excommunicated, and detestable in the eyes of God and man*: and this pressed upon all Christians by the authority and example of St. John!

But I would ask, whether a behaviour of this sort be agreeable to the ordinary temper and spirit of the gospel, or of that Jesus, who came into the world as a *physician to the sick*; and in that character sought out the publican and the sinner, for the opportunity of healing them; and preferred the heretical Sadducee and the schismatical Samaritan, to the fierce Zealot and the orthodox Pharisee? No, it is so far from being conformable to the ordinary rules of Christian duty, that it was copied, as Dr. Berriman himself owns, from *the Jewish institutes*: as if it flowed from that principle by which this same Apostle, while yet raw and unacquainted with the benevolent temper of his new religion, was calling down *fire from heaven on the Samaritans, after the example of Elias*, and was reproved accordingly by our Lord, *for not knowing what manner of spirit he was of*.

If I should ask these gentlemen also what it is that they mean by the word Heretic, we should find in the end, that they meant nothing more by it, than one who differed from them in any article of religion which they held to be important. Dr. Waterland calls him, an *open impugner of fundamentals*, and labours to prove, that we ought not to hold communion with any of that character. And should we ask once more, *what are these fundamentals?* he would

refer us without doubt in the first place to *the doctrine of the Trinity*: whence I have drawn the testimonies above ascribed to him; the importance of which makes the subject of that very book: and this doctrine indeed is held so fundamental by the Papists, that the disbelief of it, though but secretly entertained by a priest, is declared to annul the whole efficacy of his ministry, and of the sacraments themselves, not only to himself, but to all others, how innocent soever, to whom he should happen to administer them. But among Protestants, the distinction of fundamentals has been constantly applied to those doctrines alone which are clearly and precisely delivered in the holy Scriptures: and how far this character will suit with the doctrine of the Trinity, I leave to others to determine: yet this, I think, we need not scruple to say, that it is nowhere expressly declared by any of the earliest fathers; and, as the most learned among the Papists assert, was never affirmed or taught by the church before the council of Nice.

Irenæus, speaking of the Mosaic distinction of animals into *clean and unclean*, says, "The law foretold all these things figuratively, by animals denoting men: those which divide the hoof and chew the cud, it pronounces clean; those which do neither, unclean. Who then are clean? Those who go on firmly, believing in *the Father and in the Son*. For this is the firmness of those who have the double hoof." Hence we see, that the fundamental doctrine, or the firmness of the Christian faith, in this early age was, to believe in *the Father and in the Son*. In the ages next following, many different opinions successively prevailed, and were held orthodox in their turns: but as soon as the Arian controversy began to disturb the peace of the Church, Constantine the Great wrote a letter in common to Arius and Alexander, bishop of Alexandria, the opposite chiefs in the dispute, in which he treats the whole question "as vain, foolish, and impertinent; as a dispute of words without sense, which none could explain, nor any comprehend; as the fruit of idleness and leisure misemployed, which no way affected the sum of religion; and that to quarrel about such trifles and subtleties, was childish, and below the gravity of Priests; wherefore, he earnestly exhorts them to put an end to so silly a contest, productive of nothing but quarrels and blasphemies among the people; and to

return to their former friendship and communion with each other."

This letter was sent by Hosius, a learned and venerable bishop, chiefly intrusted by the Emperor in the affairs of the Church, and is commended both by Eusebius and Socrates, as *excellent, admirable, and full of wisdom*; which shews what was the opinion both of the Church and the State with regard to this question, or *parting point*, as Dr. Waterland calls it, before the council of Nice.

But to return to our story of St. John and Cerinthus. If we allow it to be true, the conduct of St. John cannot be considered in any other light, than as an extraordinary case, or the effect of that divine power which was peculiar to the apostles, and ceased with the apostolic age; by which they were enabled to penetrate the hearts of men and discern the secret motives that actuated those early corrupters of the Christian faith. Epiphanius, as I have already intimated, declares it to have been suggested by a special inspiration. It is absurd, therefore, to propose an act directed by an extraordinary commission from heaven, as a rule of proceeding in ordinary cases: and it would make wild work among us, for weak and fallible men to revive and exercise a discipline which was grounded on infallibility; and to pretend to judge, with an apostolic authority, of the hearts and spirits of their fellow-christians, without the apostolic gift of discerning those spirits; yet this is one of the principal points which is pressed by Dr. Waterland, through his whole treatise on *the importance of the doctrine of the Trinity*.

The same doctor, however, on a different occasion, where he is vindicating the morality of certain acts related of the ancient prophets and other pious men in the Old Testament, declares, "that such facts of an extraordinary kind, which were the immediate effects of a divine impulse, are not recorded as examples of common practice, nor to be warranted in common men, unless specially authorized in the same manner as those prophets were." The case is the same with regard to the apostles: the severe censures which they sometimes passed on Heretics and other wicked men, being the suggestions of a divine spirit, ought not to be drawn into precedent, but by the direction of the same spirit: for otherwise the peace of the church would necessarily be disturbed by perpetual schisms and quarrels, and

its best members, through the clamour and rage of a few zealots, often treated as the worst. Every man's experience will furnish instances of the wretched fruits of this zeal, in the bigoted, vicious, and ignorant part both of the Clergy and the Laity; who, puffed with the pride of an imaginary orthodoxy, and detesting all free inquiry as dangerous to their ease and sure to expose their ignorance, take pleasure in defaming and insulting men of learning, candour, and probity, who happen to be touched with any scruples, or charged with any opinions which they think fit to call Heretical.

The very learned and pious bishop Taylor, speaking of this very story, says, *It is a good precedent for us, when the case is equal. St. John could discern the spirit of Cerinthus; and his heresy was notorious, fundamental, and highly criminal; and the Apostle, a person assisted up to infallibility.* It is this character then of infallibility, which alone can warrant us in copying the pretended act of the Apostle; for unless we be possessed of this, the case can never be equal: and the sole inference which we can reasonably draw in the mean time from St. John's behaviour towards Cerinthus, as well as towards the Thief above-mentioned, is, that by his power of discerning spirits, he knew the Heretic to be a profligate and determined enemy of the Christian faith; and the Thief to be a good-natured youth, who, through the giddiness of his age, and the contagion of bad company, had been drawn inconsiderately into a rash and desperate frolic. But to propose this case, as a test or standing proof of the *superior iniquity of heresy, above the grossest immorality*; of its being more abominable than robbery, or in some cases, as we are told, than even *felony or treason*, is certainly dangerous to society; tending to turn men's heads with fanaticism, and to introduce violent and sanguinary proceedings in the affair of religious differences.

For what else is it that has given birth to all those murders and massacres which Heretics have so often suffered in all those countries where this doctrine has ever prevailed, and to which they stand exposed at this day, wherever it still prevails? The effect is natural and unavoidable: for if robbery and treason be crimes so intolerable to society, that it is necessary to punish them with death, it follows of course, that crimes more odious still both to God and man, must deserve a severer treatment, by the addi-

tion of racks, tortures, and fires, which are all therefore actually applied in such cases, by every Christian nation, persuaded of the truth of this same principle.

Our divines indeed take pains to disclaim the charge of Popish cruelty, and profess to mean nothing more than the necessity of *spiritual censures*. They tell us that piety to God, charity to man, justice to ourselves, require the exercise of such censures: *that it is fervent charity, though expressed in an harsher way; since palliating medicines would be cruel, where corrosives are the only means of cure.* But all this is a mere fallacy, and the very cant of the Romish Inquisitors; who make the same pretence of piety, charity, and justice, without a grain of them in any of their proceedings, and in the very exercise of such barbarities as are shocking to humanity itself.

Dr. Waterland, however, says, *That divines may still desire that such offenders may live to repent, rather than suffer death or civil penalties.* But what if they should not repent? Why then, *they perish*, he says, *with their eyes open, and may take the blame to themselves.* And in truth, all spiritual jurisdiction, whether in Popish or Protestant hands, must of course terminate in civil penalties, since it would be contemptible without them, and unable to enforce its own censures. But since civil punishments for speculative opinions, if openly and professedly claimed, might be shocking to a free nation, it is artful to evade that odium, by beginning at the other end, and to establish the thing more securely, by seeming to disavow it. But it is certain, that there is very little difference between Protestant and Popish tyranny, if a liberty be not allowed to private judgment in all speculative opinions, without restraint, or fear of punishment on any other account, than of its being exercised unseasonably and intemperately to the disturbance of the state.

On the whole, it appears, I think, from what is said above, 1st, That this hearsay story concerning St. John and Cerinthus, is at the best of so uncertain and doubtful a credit, that we cannot reasonably lay any stress, or ground any point of duty upon it. 2ndly, That if we should grant it even to be true, it would be absurd and dangerous to the peace of the Church, in its present circumstances, to establish it as a rule of conduct to private and ordinary Christians.



Matt. xxii. 42 : "*What think ye of Christ ?*" a Discourse.

(Concluded from page 148.)

3. "*What think ye of Christ ?*" That he was the *Son of Man*. The term "*Son of Man*," is repeatedly applied by Jesus to himself in the New Testament ; but never would he have used such an expression in reference to himself, had he not been (as Trinitarians teach) a son of man : and he could not have been a *son* of man, unless he had a *man* for his father. When Philip met with Nathaniel, he said unto him, " We have found him of whom Moses, in the law, and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, **THE SON OF JOSEPH.**" This was the uniform opinion entertained by our Lord's contemporaries ; nor is there any thing in the New Testament which militates against it, but the fictitious stories prefixed to the Gospels by Matthew and Luke, and these are at variance with the genealogies.

All the genealogies among the Jews were kept in the *male* line. One of these commences with Abraham, and terminates with Joseph ; and the other begins with Joseph and ends with Adam : but of what use is this record of generations, unless Joseph was *actually* the *father* of Jesus ? The object of the writers was to prove that Jesus was a lineal descendant from David, which however has not been done if Jesus had not a *human* father ; for the historians might as well have inserted the genealogy of any other person instead of Joseph's, were he not the *real* father of Jesus. The genealogy of Mary, his mother, is *wholly unknown* ; so that we have not the slightest evidence of Jesus being a descendant of David through his mother ; consequently, there is no proof whatever that those prophecies are fulfilled which foretell the Messiah's being the legitimate offspring of David. The genealogy or the miraculous conception must, therefore, be *false* ; but if you reject the genealogy, you destroy an essential proof of the Messiahship of Jesus.

Those strange circumstances which are recorded in the common version of the New Testament, between the 16th verse of the 1st, and the beginning of the 3rd chapter of Matthew, are entirely fabulous. They contain more difficulties than are to be found in all the Christian Scriptures. It is evident that they were not contained in the original Gospel, nor in those copies used by the Ebionites, who

formed a large proportion, if not the whole body, of the early Hebrew Christians, for whose use this Gospel was written. When Jesus was born, Herod had been dead *at least* TWO YEARS, and therefore he could not have given an order for massacreing all the children in Bethlehem, from two years old and under. This circumstance alone stamps *falsehood* on the whole story. Our Lord is nowhere styled Jesus of Bethlehem; which, had he been born in that place, would, according to the uniform custom of the Jews, have been his proper designation.

This absurd legend was either taken from the Apocryphal Gospels, which are supposed to have been written by some of the Gnostics, in order to throw discredit on Christianity, or else it is the production of a weak Gentile convert, who conceived that, by introducing it, he should elevate the dignity of Christ, and abate the odium under which his followers then laboured. The writer does not say from whence he had the story. Mary is the only person with whom it could originate; but her testimony is not any where adduced. Coming, therefore, in so questionable a shape; contradicting as it does the prophecies relating to the Messiah; being at variance with the testimony of our Lord's contemporaries, and opposed to his own declarations, the fiction of the miraculous conception, with all its concomitants, ought to be rejected by every friend to Christianity. It long has been, and ever will be, a formidable weapon in the hands of unbelievers; who, in consequence of this story being incorporated with the Gospels, are ever on the alert to condemn the whole as fabulous.

There are some persons who contend, that the doctrine of the miraculous conception is not taught in the introduction to Luke; but whether it is or not, there are other fabulous circumstances contained in it which impress the whole narrative with *improbability*; and as it is of no use whatever in the scheme of Christianity, it would be better to discard it, as well as the introduction to Matthew, especially as it was not contained in the earliest copies of this Gospel. From this brief statement, it is apparent that Jesus Christ was *the Son of Man*, and that *Joseph* was his *real and legitimate* father.

4. "What think ye of Christ?" That he was the *Son of God*. This phrase is of frequent occurrence in the Scriptures; and nothing can be more evident than that

the Father and the Son must be two distinct beings; and that the Father is the *senior*, the Son the *junior*. "Son of God" and "Christ" are synonymous terms: they both mean the same as "Messiah," or "Anointed;" i. e. set apart for a special purpose. Nathaniel designated Jesus "the Son of God, the King of Israel." When John the Baptist saw the Spirit descending on Jesus, he announced him as "the Son of God." Peter, in reply to our Lord's question, "Whom say ye that I am?" answered, "Thou art *the Christ*, the *Son of the living God*." Now I will venture to assert, with the fullest confidence, that neither Nathaniel, nor John, nor Peter, had any idea of the person of whom they spoke being himself the ETERNAL GOD. There is not the slightest evidence in the Scriptures to this purpose. When the High Priest adjured Jesus by the living God to tell him whether he was "the Christ, the Son of God," he could not possibly imply that the terms "living God," and "Son of God," were of the same import. The most marked distinction is always observed between JEHOVAH and his *Messenger*. John states it as a reason for composing his history, "that we might believe that Jesus is the *Christ*, the *Son of God*." Had the beloved disciple believed his Master to be the Supreme Being, he would have plainly said so; and would have stated, in the most explicit manner, that he wrote his narrative to prove, not, the *Sonship* of Jesus, but his *Deity*.

"Son of God" is a term descriptive of *character* and *office*. It bears no relation whatever to the *personal* nature of our Lord. It is applied to him in consequence of his being raised to a state of peculiar privilege and dignity. The judges and rulers of Israel were designated "*gods*" and "*children of the Most High*," because they were raised by him to power and dominion; therefore the term "Son of God" was truly applicable to Jesus of Nazareth, on account of his high *office* and superior dignity, and in consequence of the power and authority to which he was exalted by God. This appellation, then, instead of countenancing the popular notion of Christ's Deity, is entirely subversive of it; and is in perfect accordance with the PROPER UNITY OF GOD—the basis of all true religion. What is denominated the "*eternal sonship*" of Jesus Christ, is a notion extremely absurd. Some authors have rendered themselves ridiculous in attempting to ex-

plain it; and it is a term to which we can affix no ideas whatever.

But, my friends, Jesus is also the "Son of God" in consequence of his resurrection from the dead. Hence he is called the "only-begotten," the "first-born;" being the *first* and *only* person that was ever raised to the enjoyment of immortal life. The resurrection of our blessed Lord is the most glorious event that ever took place. Well might the Apostle call it "glad tidings:" it is indeed "glad tidings of great joy to all people;" for we cannot view Jesus as the risen "Son of God," without extending our views to that glorious period when he will descend from heaven to re-animate our sleeping dust; and, if we conduct ourselves as his sincere and faithful disciples, he will raise us to those mansions of bliss which he is preparing in his heavenly Father's house. He not only brought *life* and *immortality* fully to light by his teaching, but he has given us a *pattern* and a *pledge* of our future life, by his own conquest over the King of Terrors. His resurrection, however, would have been no pattern and pledge of ours, were his nature not *properly human*; for it does not follow, if he possessed the *inherent* power of infusing life into his own dead body, that our dead bodies will be raised, which do not possess this inherent principle. But if we firmly believe that Jesus was raised, and that he now "liveth by the *power of God*," and that it was on account of his *obedience* unto death that his Father and his God so highly exalted him, then we may, with full assurance of faith,

"Think on the grave where *he* was laid,
And calm descend to *ours*."

Further. If we believe Jesus to be the "Son of God," we may safely rely on all his promises. Our faith could not be stronger, if we had heard those promises from the mouth of God himself. Let us then ardently look to Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith, who, for the joy set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame attached to it, and is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Let the same mind be in us that was in him: let us in every respect walk worthy the disciples of so virtuous and holy a Master. Though made in all things as we are made, and tempted as we are tempted; yet he nobly withstood all the allurements of the world; there is

therefore nothing, in the way of duty, that *he* did but what *we* may do also : for " what man *has* done, man *may* do." Let us, then, persevere in the Christian race, keeping a steady eye on the invaluable prize set before us—" a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

With the *example* of Jesus before us, let us never basely yield to temptation ; for we also shall reap in due season, if we faint not. Fighting under the victorious banner of the great Captain of our salvation, we cannot fail of obtaining a complete and glorious victory over error, sin and death, and of being honoured with the possession of eternal life. " To him that *overcometh*," says he, " will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." " He that *overcometh*, the same shall be clothed in white raiment ; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." " He that *overcometh* shall inherit all things." " To him that *overcometh* will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Let us then perform the duty of faithful soldiers, and we shall all share in the fruits and triumphs of the spiritual victory. We shall be introduced into the palace of the Great King, partake of his rich bounties, and for ever enjoy the contemplation of his smiling face. In his blessed abode, free from the storms and tempests of the present chequered scene, and from all the troubles that life is heir to, we shall have for our companions the wise and virtuous of all ages and nations ; there shall we be re-united to our pious relatives and friends, never more to endure the pain of separation ; there, in that " land of pure delight," not one tear shall ever dim the eye, nor a sigh swell the bosom, but throughout eternal ages all will be peace, harmony, cheerfulness, felicity and love !

Having laid before you a concise view of those opinions which, as a Unitarian, I honestly entertain concerning the person of Christ, which I believe to be the genuine doctrine of the sacred Scriptures, and which it has been my ardent wish and unwearied endeavour, above six years, to inculcate on your minds, I now submit, whether the body of Christians to which we have the honour and the happiness of being united, is deserving of the stigmas so frequently cast on it by Trinitarians, from the pulpit and the press ; or whether the illiberal appellation recently ex-

libited to public view, in numerous large advertisements; on the walls of this and the adjacent towns, by the REV. DOCTOR HAWKER, of Plymouth, is characteristic of our sentiments or conduct. Can we who thus think of Christ,—who hold those Scriptural views of the illustrious Founder of our holy religion,—we who venerate and love his name, and exalt his sacred character;—can *we*, I ask, be *justly* considered as forming a part of "THIS CHRIST-DESPISING GENERATION"? There cannot be a doubt but *we* are the persons whom the Doctor chiefly had in view; but we throw back the LIBEL to the source whence it emanated, as being wholly inapplicable to us. If we were disposed, might we not ask, Are there not many in the present day that make great parade of religion, who are DENIERS OF GOD;—who, if they do not actually blot him out of existence, render him almost useless? But we will not retaliate. Those erroneous, mystical and contradictory notions of the Supreme Being, advocated by the author of the advertisements, are happily on the wane; and ere long they will be known only in the passages of church history. TRUTH IS MIGHTY, AND IT WILL FINALLY PREVAIL!

It is with considerable pleasure that I now see before me so many friends who, prior to the opening of this place for Unitarian Christian worship, had never duly considered the important controversy pending between Unitarians and Trinitarians; but being excited to free inquiry, and having subsequently read and reflected on the subject, are become firmly established in the doctrine of *one undivided God*, and the *proper humanity* of his beloved Son Jesus Christ;—who are *not ashamed* of making an *open profession* of their tenets; and who are ready and willing (if necessary) to bear every reproachful epithet contained in the copious vocabulary of reputed orthodoxy, and which are so liberally bestowed on the "sect every where spoken against."

In stating my sentiments from this place, I have never spoken disrespectfully of the *character* of our opponents, however bitterly they may have inveighed against us; but have always given them credit, as a body, for sincerity and good intentions, though I have sometimes strongly expressed my feelings respecting the disingenuous, ungentlemanly and unchristian-like *conduct* of some individuals. I may, however, venture to assert, without fear of contradiction, that in no instance have I ever attempted to bias your judgment by any *dishonourable* means. I have

earnestly and fearlessly stated the result of my inquiries—leaving the arguments and observations to make their own impression. This mode, through the Divine permission and blessing, I shall continue to pursue, regardless of the censures and the frowns of man. Having the testimony of conscience, and acting under the solemn inspection of Him to whose observation all hearts are open, it will be my strenuous endeavour, while life and health are continued, to extend the knowledge of pure Christian truth, and to inculcate and enforce the practice of virtue and piety.

May that which is sown in weakness be raised in power; may the Unitarian cause, which is the cause of God, of Christ, and of his Apostles, enlarge its boundaries in this town and its neighbourhood; and may it proceed “conquering and to conquer,” until all shall believe and confess that there is only “ONE GOD, THE FATHER, and one Mediator between God and men, THE MAN CHRIST JESUS!”
Amen.

LINES, (by Mr. Roscoe.)

ON receiving from Dr. Rush, of Philadelphia, during the war, a piece of the tree under which William Penn made his treaty with the Indians, which was blown down in 1812, and the part sent converted to the purpose of an inkstand.

From clime to clime, from shore to shore,
The war-fiend raised his hateful yell;
And 'midst the storms that realms deplore,
Penn's honour'd Tree of Concord fell.

And of that Tree, that ne'er again
Shall Spring's reviving influence know,
A relic o'er the Atlantic main
Was sent—the gift of *foe to foe*.

But though no more its ample shade
Wave green beneath Columbia's sky,
Though every branch be now decay'd,
And all its scatter'd leaves be dry;

Yet 'midst this relic's sainted space,
A health-restoring flood shall spring,
In which the angel-form of Peace
May stoop to dip her dove-like wing.

So once the staff the prophet bore,
 By wondering eyes again was seen
 To swell with life through every pore,
 To bud afresh with foliage green.
 The wither'd branch again shall grow,
 Till o'er the earth its shades extend;
 And this—the gift of foe to foe—
 Become the gift of friend to friend.

Extract from the Second Volume of the Life of the Right Rev. Jeremy Taylor, D. D., Lord Bishop of Down, Connor, and Dromore; with a critical Examination of his Writings, by Reginald Heber, D. D., Lord Bishop of Calcutta. (Published in 1824.)

PAGE 41. “ ‘ It is, however, necessary to observe, that the power which is here claimed for each Christian church, of excluding from its public ministry the teachers of erroneous doctrines, is claimed for the Church only in its spiritual capacity, and that it has no reference to those who are without its pale, and involves in itself no civil pains or penalties whatever. Such penalties, it cannot be too constantly born in mind, the church of him, whose kingdom was not of this world, has no power or title to inflict; and for the civil ruler to inflict them on religious grounds, Taylor has clearly shewn to be at once an intrusion, a tyranny, and an absurdity.’ If indeed, Taylor may be thought in his zeal for the Liberty of Prophesying, to have made it too completely independent of ecclesiastical controul, he may be said, on the other hand, to have been too bounded and cautious in his views of civil toleration, when he gives a general power to the civil ruler to repress or punish whatever he may be taught to consider as blasphemy or open idolatory. (Sect. xiii. 1, 2; Vol. VIII. p. 117.)

“ The first of these crimes, if not very accurately defined, might involve in its net very many descriptions of persons whom Taylor would have been sorry to behold the victims of religious severities. The Deist and the Jew, who maintain Christ to be an impostor, unquestionably blaspheme the Divine Teacher of Christians; the modern Unitarian, who maintains him to be a mere man of men, the son of Joseph, as surely detracts from the dignity of that person whom the majority of Christians adore, and by departing

from the apostles' creed, has completely excluded himself from its protection; and if known idolatry may be repressed by violence, or punished by the sword, we justify at once all the odious severities of the Spaniards and the Portuguese towards their heathen subjects, if we do not involve in the same snare our fellow-christians of the Greek and Roman communions.

"It is probable, indeed, as none of these persons were at that time in any immediate danger of persecution, (since for the case of the Roman Catholics he afterwards provided, and the Socinians had not as yet advanced to their modern pitch of free-thinking,) that Taylor was not anxious to pursue his own principles to an extent which might give offence to those whom he desired to conciliate. It is certain, that his arguments against punishing men for following the dictates of an erroneous conscience, as well as that which is taken from the dishonour done to Christianity, by supposing it to need any other defence than those weapons of argument and good life by which it subdued the world, are no less cogent against all persecution whatever, than against that which has for its subject the minor dissensions of Christendom.

"Nor is there any real weight in the difficulty which appears to have perplexed him, in what manner to reconcile the duty incumbent on every magistrate to repress all open acts of sin and impiety, with the toleration which the same magistrate may be called on to grant to the worshipers of idols, or to the assailant of Christianity. That difficulty arises from a misapprehension of the magistrate's power, whose office, as it is purely civil and secular, has no direct concern with the souls of men, and who is neither bound nor authorized to interfere between man and his Maker, or to take on himself the punishment of offences against God, except where those offences disturb the temporal peace, or endanger the temporal property of the subject.

"Thus, as idolatry, abstractedly considered, is a crime against God, and not against man, it is a crime the punishment of which God may be conceived to have reserved to himself, and which the secular prince is not called on to punish or to repress, any otherwise than by his own example, and by securing to his subjects the means of religious instruction. Nor can the precedent of the Jewish law avail to lead us to a different conclusion; since, that which

might be expedient and necessary under the peculiar circumstances of their theocracy, is no example for us who live under dispensations entirely different; and since, though God may be conceived, as He did in this instance, to delegate a part of his power to a particular magistrate, yet other magistrates, who have no such express commission or direct command, would be guilty of usurpation no less than cruelty, if they presumed to determine on the conduct of 'another man's servant.'

"But if the particular species of idolatry complained of, be attended with obscene or cruel rites, or if the public processions or ostentatious sacrifices of its votaries, have an evident tendency to shock the feelings of the majority of their fellow-citizens, and disturb the public tranquillity, the magistrate is not only permitted, but obliged in conscience to punish or restrain them according to his power, and in such measure as the interests of the community under his charge may require.

"Thus the Persians did ill under Xerxes, in destroying the Grecian temples, because not only has a foreign power no right to interfere in the national religion of any state, but because the idolatry of Greece involved no practices that we know of, inconsistent with the general peace of society. But the Roman Senate did well in repressing and punishing the Bacchanalians, because they had sufficient evidence of the debauchery and violence with which those infernal rites were celebrated. Nor is it useless to observe, that the picture which is handed down to us of the open whoredom and human sacrifices with which the gods of the Canaanites were worshiped, would be in itself, and without any divine injunction, a good reason why Moses should have prohibited, under the severest penalties, the practice among his own people of such forms of pollution and bloodshed.

"In like manner, though it would, indeed, be the height of wickedness and folly, to forbid the Hindoos, in their own country, to address their devotions to whatever idols; and in whatever form, they pleased; yet, if certain Hindoos resident in London, were to institute a public procession in honour of Juggernaut, it would be no persecution to command them to perform their acts of faith in private; while, if in the course of those acts any thing actually criminal took place, it would not be the less an offence against the laws, and punishable by the hand of justice;

however it might have arisen from the dictates of a real or pretended superstition. Nor, whatever religious prejudice might be pleaded, did our Indian government do wrong in forbidding the murder of female children, nor would it do wrong (however a real or mistaken policy may forbid the measure) in preventing the sacrifice of widows on the funeral piles of their husbands.

“The distinction which has been laid down as to *actions*, will apply with equal accuracy to *doctrines*. Those which are immediately, or in their evident and avowed consequences, injurious to civil society, and those only, are fit subjects for suppression and punishment; and they are so, not because they are offences against God, but because they are dangerous to mankind. Thus if a man maintains in argument the falsehood of the Apostles’ Creed, he is, perhaps, a blasphemer, certainly an infidel or a heretic; but his crime is not one which it belongs to the magistrate to punish.

“But the man who persuades his neighbour to insurrection, murder, incest, a promiscuous intercourse of the sexes, or the invasion of private property; the preacher of Atheism, who lays the axe to the root of all moral obligation, and the impugnner of a future state of retribution, who deprives morality of its only effectual sanction—such men as these, being common enemies to the peace of the world, are to be put down and repressed by whatever severities are necessary to abate the nuisance. With these exceptions, I know no limit to the toleration of speculative opinions. It is true, indeed, that the teacher of any opinion, false or true, who seeks to inflame in his cause the bad passions of the multitude, who violates the decency due even to established error, and who assails not only the opinions, but the characters and motives of those opposed to him; will, under all circumstances, be deserving of general indignation, and, under particular circumstances, may be a proper subject of legal coercion. But this is as a breaker of the public peace, not as an enemy to that religion which, as it is founded *on argument alone*, can, *by argument alone*, be legitimately or effectually defended. The length of this digression will, I trust, be pardoned, on account of the importance of the interests which its subject involves, and the necessity which appeared of defining more clearly what Taylor had left uncertain. Of the beauty of particular passages in the ‘*Liberty of Prophecy*’ on

its general eloquence and clearness of reasoning, as well as on the admirable temper and moderation which throughout distinguish it, any further observations are needless."

G. M. D.

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Plan for Religious Improvement of the Poor.

SIR,

Bridport, April 22, 1826.

IN compliance with a request made in your Reformer of February last, (p. 79,) respecting "the instruction of young persons," the following statement is sent for your insertion.

Having frequently observed with regret, that the pupils of the Sunday-school, and others who had not the advantage of regular religious instruction in their families, very soon became indifferent to religion; and knowing that the best informed need "line upon line, and precept upon precept;" considering also the injury done to youth by the perusal of books of a light and trifling, if not an immoral tendency; some ladies of the Unitarian Society in this town, were induced to adopt a plan of meeting, one evening in the week, any females who might be disposed to attend, for the purpose of improving them in reading, and of leading their minds to right subjects.

It is now about eight years since the commencement of this association. The time occupied is generally one hour and a half. The business of the meeting is conducted in the following manner: Religious instruction being its first object, a select portion of scripture is read by the pupils alternately, each taking a verse or complete sentence. For the purpose of explanation, the more familiar parts of a commentary have been at the same time employed. Well-beloved's new edition of the Bible, Kenrick's Exposition, and Mrs. Trimmer's Sacred History, have all been found useful in the accomplishment of this plan. In reading Mrs. Trimmer's work, however, it has been thought advisable to select such passages only as accord with our views of Christian truth. When this is gone through, a portion of natural history, biography, or some other interesting work of religious and moral instruction, is read, suited to the capacities of the young auditory. Watson's popular "Evidences" has proved a valuable and pleasing work to the society. The instructors, persuaded that the more we are led to perceive the power, wisdom, and goodness of the Deity, and to live under an habitual sense of his inspection,

the more constantly shall we honour him, and dread to incur his displeasure, endeavour as much as possible to excite in the minds of the young a desire to contemplate God in his works and word, and to impress the solemn conviction that he is the ever-present witness to their thoughts, words, and actions. Advice is also given them as occasion requires, in a friendly and affectionate manner, respecting their dress, associates, habits, &c., and the business of the evening concludes with prayer. Remarks occasionally made by the young persons themselves, are encouraged as the best mode of ascertaining the effects produced by the instructions given.

There is reason to believe that in several instances, this meeting has been attended by the Divine blessing. It has evidently contributed to unite more closely the different classes of the society, and has led to the establishment of a library, by means of which knowledge is diffused very generally in the congregation. Those who are engaged in this work, have readily acceded to the wish expressed by your correspondent, that they would furnish an account of the methods pursued, from a persuasion that the adoption of similar plans in other Christian societies, would be attended with the same beneficial results.

A. H.

On the British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

SIR,

Honiton, April 12, 1826.

PERMIT me to request the attention of your readers to a subject of considerable importance, in which every Unitarian should feel a common interest; and although I have not the vanity to suppose my humble interference can do much towards advancing what has been justly termed our "*Righteous and Immortal Cause*;" yet believing it to be the duty of every individual to use his utmost exertions in the support of it, by improving the talent committed to his care, I venture my observations to the public with the less diffidence, through the medium of your useful Miscellany.

Previous to forming the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, the want of it was universally felt: it is well known that the Unitarian Fund was the means of much usefulness, but from inadequate resources, and other causes, its operations were comparatively limited. Now that another Institution is formed on a more extensive scale, it

needs only the support of its well-wishers to answer the most sanguine expectations that may be formed respecting it. The Committee has already laid the plan, rules, &c. before the public; my intention is only to impress the necessity of its receiving that prompt assistance and cordial co-operation, without which no scheme, however well-concerted, can ultimately succeed. Within the last few years we have witnessed the great advantages derived from *union*, in the amazing success that has attended the zealous and unremitting exertions of various religious societies. By the trifling subscriptions of a great many individuals, hundreds of thousands of pounds have been collected. The Gospel has been distributed in almost every part of the habitable globe, and the doctrines of Christianity most extensively diffused. The veil of error and superstition has been withdrawn from the eyes of millions of our fellow-creatures; yet it has been only partially removed, and the mists of ignorance still obscure the sight of thousands who see with others' eyes, and read with others' ears. To proceed in this work of Reformation, and to disseminate the doctrines of the Gospel in their native simplicity, uncorrupted by superstition, and undisguised by mystery, is the contemplated object of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. Although it must afford pleasure to all who are anxious for the promotion of genuine Christianity, to reflect on the increase that has been made to the number of its adherents; yet it must be considered, that there are thousands and tens of thousands in our native land, who have never heard the sound of Unitarianism, but who we believe only wait for the call of its friends, to reject the doctrines of human invention for those of divine authority. When a Unitarian Missionary has preached where our principles were previously unheard of, the greatest desire to embrace them has frequently prevailed, nor can we ascribe this to the charm of novelty; there is something in truth so irresistible and attractive, that it must and will force its way into the minds of all who are not steeled by prejudice, or the most inveterate dislike: it works slowly and silently, but surely and effectually. We do not immediately witness all the success that may be wished for, but in time the good seed will spring up, and afford an abundant harvest. How many small societies are there in different parts of the kingdom, who have been formed by only hearing a Missionary preacher once or twice, and reading the society's

tracts. They only require timely assistance to increase their numbers, and to erect temples where the defenders of pure Christianity may worship God in spirit and in truth. The most unexpected events have transpired, to give us encouragement and urge us on in the path of duty. The remarkable conversion of Rammohun Roy, William Roberts, and the Rev. W. Adam, seems as if Providence had stationed those worthy individuals in a part of the world where reformation was most needed, and caused the glorious day-star of truth to dawn on a benighted country. But let it be remembered, that a time will come when the most illustrious champions of our faith will resign the palm awarded them by their brethren here below, for a deathless and eternal one; and although He who governs all things for the best, will raise up other instruments of his will when they are slumbering in their graves; yet it is through human means his purposes are to be accomplished, and it is by our exertions that they are to be forwarded.

These are some of the reasons why the British and Foreign Unitarian Association has a pre-eminent claim to our support; therefore should every Unitarian Congregation in England, Ireland, Wales and Scotland, contribute something in furtherance of those important objects which it designs, through the Divine blessing, to accomplish. Every individual may be supposed able to afford something; and if only one penny per month is subscribed by each, a very ample fund will be realized. Let us not be backward in this "labour of love;" let it be seen that our religion is a practical one; that it inspires us with feelings of the noblest and purest philanthropy; and may the lengthened lists of subscribers in our monthly publications wipe away the reproach, that error and superstition can inspire more zeal in the bosoms of their deluded votaries, than can be found amongst the friends of truth. When we view the formidable phalanx of reputed Orthodoxy, marshalled in brilliant array against us, proudly exulting in their boasted superiority of wealth, and power, and influence — when we witness the interested efforts of the *few* to enthrall the minds of the *many*, behold the slow progress of religious truth, and hear our principles calumniated and misrepresented — should we not be eager, in the true spirit of Christian warfare, to thin the ranks of our opponents, to rescue our fellow-creatures from their mental slavery, and to con-

tend earnestly for the purity of the faith once delivered to the saints?

The British and Foreign Unitarian Association should be regarded as the main-spring of that mighty engine which is at work to diffuse pure Christianity. It is not a tyrannical convocation formed to enact laws, creeds, and articles of faith : it is not an assembly of individuals aiming at priestly power and influence : its councils are not governed by caprice, or divided by faction. The members of it are not the satellites of a party, nor wield the arms of force and compulsion. It is a noble and august institution, and its admirers may cause it to be a powerful and a mighty one. Would we again ask the use of such a society, inquire its motives, and know why it solicits our support, let us look at the well-filled chapels of our Calvinistic brethren, listen awhile to the misrepresentations of the Divine Being, hear the Son of God revered as God himself, and everlasting punishments decreed to all who refuse to do so. Let us glance at the proud, domineering influence of an enormous and wealthy Establishment ; see the religion of Jesus identified with worldly pomp and ambition ; and witness the efforts that are made to fetter the human mind and restrain the exercise of free inquiry : or, if we think the religion of our own country needs no reformation, and will be content to witness the prevalence of ignorance and error in our native land, let us convey our ideas to a new and more extensive theatre for human improvement ; ask if the sacred soil of a new world is not prepared to receive the germ of true religion ; or, if it has sprung up there, if it has been fostered by free inquiry and liberty of conscience—if new altars are continually erecting to the “ One only living and true God ” ? If we find that *America* needs not *our* aid, we may be assured, that where the rude and uncultivated Indian worships his unknown God, and the proud Bel and Nebo of Idolatry are swaying the minds of a debased and degraded people, there is a wide and ample field for the most unlimited exertions.

I conclude, by earnestly beseeching my Unitarian brethren to give this subject an immediate and attentive consideration. If the cause we advocate be the cause of God, and of truth, of Divine benevolence and human happiness, and its object be to promote the best interests of mankind, then does it strongly appeal to all of us. Those whom Pro-

vidence hath blessed with wealth and affluence, should consider, that where much is given, much will be required; and all who move in a humbler sphere, may remember, that the free-will offering, however small, is a pledge of their good wishes for its success and prosperity.

J. M.

On Church Government.

SIR,

Coventry, May 11, 1826.

WITHOUT presuming to answer the inquiries on Church Government, contained in the Reformer of last month, (p. 161,) and to which the attention of Mr. Wright is more particularly invited, I may be permitted to remark, that they involve considerations of deep interest to the friends of Unitarian Christianity, and to hope they will receive that attention which their importance deserves. To the want of a judicious system of management; I attribute the paucity of numbers which has marked the congregation in this city for a long series of years, and which forms a striking contrast with the flourishing condition of other places, where the population is very much less, but the interest of the parties, individually and collectively, as it would seem, very much greater. It does not appear that to convey the concerns of a congregation over to the management of the minister and trustees, is to afford the happiest means of ensuring its increase and prosperity. Under this impression, a few persons at Coventry, without the light of experience to guide them as to its efficacy, a few years ago proposed the following plan; but they were subsequently opposed by the trustees, which prevented their carrying it into execution:—

1. They proposed that every subscriber, to the amount of one guinea per annum, should form one of a committee; that such committee should meet in the vestry once in every two months, to superintend and regulate the concerns of the society.

2. That every person subscribing to the amount of five shillings per annum, should have a voice in the appointment of the minister.

There are doubtless many others, besides the querists

waiting to see what propositions experience has enabled Mr. Wright and others to form on this subject. Among them is

A UNITARIAN.

Youth, a Poem. By a Young Lady, deceased.

GAY, happy state, when life begins to bloom,
Breathes forth its sweets, and opens all its flowers ;
When sanguine hope, in fancy's flexile loom,
Weaves the gay prospect of our future hours !

Sweet morn of life ! untinged with its pain,
Glowing with ardour, and with transport warm !
" Love, hope, and joy, fair pleasure's smiling train,"
Sport in gay circles round thy smiling form.

On thee we gaze, with fascinated eyes,
Nor heed the moments as they glide away ;
For thou art fair as fancy can devise,
Sprightly as health, and as contentment gay.

Oh ! ye just enter'd on her tempting sphere,
Who join with beating hearts her jocund throng,
Hemm'd round with gilded snares, and soon to hear
Folly's gay call, and pleasure's siren song ;

Unconscious yet of pleasure's latent sting,
Hope toys with grief, and transport smiles at care ;
We bask beneath the genial warmth of spring,
Our minds serene, and all our prospects fair.

Fair as thou art, how transient is thy bloom !
Soon hope shall wanton in thy train no more ;
Soon disappointment shed its sullen gloom,
Fade every sweet, and wither every flower.

Then first attentive to the voice of truth,
We learn how fast thy tempting charms decay ;
And find, with late regret, that flatt'ring youth
Charms to deceive, and smiles but to betray.

Ah ! could ye still be guiltless as ye seem,
As free from sorrow, as estranged from care ;
What wish would shorten your enchanting dream,
Or cloud your pleasures with the gloom of fear !

But longer travell'd in this changing state,
Experience shudders at the latent guile ;
And pity, trembling for your future fate,
Sighs at your bliss, and weeps to see you smile !

Of op'ning sense few traces yet appear,
Yours is the careless smile, the vacant thought ;
The sigh that breathes no real woe ; the tear
Shed without sorrow, and when shed, forgot.

Of vanish'd scenes and sweet enjoyments past,
No fond remembrance wakes the pensive sigh ;
No gloomy presages your joys o'ercast,
What unfelt pains the future may supply.

Life, of its treasures prodigal, imparts
To you the fairest hours it has to spare,
And in gay eddies circles round your hearts,
Frolic, as infant sports, and light as air.

Ah ! little heed ye, triflers as ye are,
That life's gay morning borne on sportive wing,
Which breathes such vernal sweets, and blooms so fair,
Soon chill'd by winter, finds no second spring.

Then prize the present hour—for who can say,
Ye smiling sons of innocence and ease,
What dreary scenes may mark your future way,
Corrupt your virtue, or destroy your peace ?

To you the mazy labyrinth of life,
Perhaps, a weary pilgrimage may prove ;
Strew'd with the thorns of hate, revenge, or strife,
Friendship betray'd, or disappointed love.

Perhaps adversity may mark your course,
Or guilt, more dreaded, your companion be ;
A prey in disappointment or remorse,
Children of sorrow, or of infamy.

Oh, melancholy prospect ! happier they,
By pitying heaven, snatch'd early to the sky ;
Just shewn on earth, the phantoms of a day,
Born in this moment—in the next to die !

A. B.

Mahommedan Oration.

SIR,

THE above is extracted from the Gleaner, a periodical magazine, published in London I believe. The Oration, according to that work, was delivered in a Mosque at Algiers, and taken down in writing in the place, by an English gentleman who visited that part some years ago. Should you think it fit for insertion in the Reformer, I should be extremely happy to see it there.

JOHN S. HYNDMAN.

God alone is Immortal ! Abraham and Solomon have slept with their fathers ; Cadigah the first born of faith, Ayesha the beloved, Omar the meek, Omri the benevolent, the companions of the apostle, and the sent of God himself, all died ; but God most high, most holy, liveth for ever. Infinities are to him as the numerals of arithmetic to the sons of Adam : the earth shall vanish before the decrees of his eternal destiny, but he liveth and reigneth for ever.

God alone is Omniscient ! Michael, whose wings are full of eyes, is blind before him. The dark night is unto him as the rays of the morning, for he noticeth the creeping of the small pismire in the dark night upon the black stone, and apprehendeth the motion of an atom in the open air.

God alone is Omnipresent ! He toucheth the immensity of space as a point ; he moveth in the depth of the ocean, and mount Atlas is hidden by the sole of his foot ; he breatheth fragrant odours to cheer the blessed in Paradise, and enliveneth the pallid flame of the profoundest hell.

God alone is Omnipotent ! He thought, and worlds were created ; he frowneth, and they dissolve into thin smoke ; he smileth, and the torments of the damned are suspended. The thunderings of Hermon are the whisperings of his voice, the rustling of his attire causeth lightning and an earthquake, and with the shadow of his garment he blot-teth out the sun.

God alone is Merciful ! When he forged his immutable decrees on the anvil of eternal justice, he tempered the miseries of the race of Ishmael in the fountains of pity. When he laid the foundations of the world, he cast a look of benevolence into the abysses of futurity, and the adamantine pillars of eternal justice were softened by the beamings of his eyes. He dropped a tear upon the embryo miseries of unborn man, and that tear, falling through the im-

measurable lapses of time, shall quench the glowing flames of the bottomless pit. He sent into the world to enlighten the darkness of the tribes, and hath prepared the pavilions of the houri for the repose of the faithful.

God alone is Just! He chains the latent cause to the distant effect, and binds them both immutably fast to the fitness of things. He decreed the unbelievers to wander in the whirlpool of error, and suited their souls to future torment. He promulgated the ineffable creed, and the germs of countless millions of believers, existing in his contemplation, expanded at the sound. His justice refresheth the faithful, while the damned spirits confess it in despair.

God is One! Abraham the faithful knew it; Moses declared it amidst the thunderings of Sinia; Jesus pronounced it, and the messenger of God, the sword of his vengeance, filled the world with that immutable truth. Surely there is one God, immortal, omniscient, omnipotent, most merciful, and just, and Mahomet is his apostle. Lift up your heads to the Eternal, and pronounce the ineffable, adorable creed, There is one God, and Mahomet is his prophet.



Remarks on a Tract, entitled, A short Daily Exercise, with Directions for Mass, Confession, and Communion, &c. Published for the Use of the Poor. By R. C., D. D.

In this publication, great emphasis is laid on the priestly office, as if such office did distinguish one Christian from another; though the New Testament expressly says of Christians in general, "Ye are a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices;" and again, "Ye are a royal priesthood, a holy nation;" nay, that they are all made kings and priests unto God. As to priestly power or authority, our blessed Lord has declared that there is an *equality* among all his disciples. *Peter* himself had no keys given to him, but those of first opening the doctrine of the resurrection both to Jews and Gentiles, and the confession which he made, "that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God," was the very rock on which God the Father would build his church, against which the gates of death should not prevail. Besides which, the apostles utterly disclaim dominion over the faith of any. But the primary end of priestly power in the Romish Church, is that of giving absolution to the confessor; whereas the New Testament every where

supposes the object of confession to be the offended or injured person, and none else. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another," says St. James; and our Lord bids the offender go and be united to his injured brother before he offers his oblations. Nay, where the offence was such as would reproach the Christian profession, and the offender unaffected by it, our Lord there bids the offended, to go and privately admonish him, and if he remained obstinate, then take two or three of the said society to reprove him. Upon this being unsuccessful, he was to tell it to the church, and have no further communication with him, till he reformed. So groundless is *auricular confession when made to a priest*.

The above publication also corrupts the object of Christian worship in the unity thereof. It does so as the Athanasian and Nicene creeds will have it, that there are three distinct persons of one and the same substance, and equal in power and glory; and yet that the Father is unoriginated and underived, the Son generated, and the Spirit proceeding. The Father is unbegotten, the Son begotten. The Father sends, the Son sent, the Spirit poured out, communicated, or given. The Father's *supremacy* is more generally acknowledged, without allowing of a subordinancy; and though that supremacy reduces an equality to a most gross absurdity, we can add, that Jesus Christ, in the character of God's well-beloved Son, always paid his worship to the one God, his God and our God, his Father and our Father, and taught his disciples and followers to contemplate the one God, the Father, as the supreme object of their address: the above creeds must, therefore, be manifest perversions of the object of religious worship. A further perversion is that of the Mediation of Jesus Christ, which I prove thus: St. Paul thus defines a mediator: "A mediator is not of one, but God is one;" that is, God, as one of the parties mediated between, cannot be a mediator, forasmuch as it is impossible he should mediate between himself and other beings; and he likewise says, that though idolatrous Gentiles had gods many and lords many, yet Christians "have but one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," and our Lord never once mentions any mediatorial name but his own. "Hitherto ye have not asked any thing in my name: ask and receive, that your joy may be full." Now, Sir, if we look into the *Litany for Family Devotions* in this missal, we find an army of media-

tors, viz. of saints, angels, archangels, holy patriarchs and prophets, apostles and evangelists, doctors, priests, levites, monks and hermits; all holy innocents, bishops and confessors, with all holy virgins and widows, who are supplicated to make intercession for the devotee. N. B. Not a single word of any virtuous married woman, though marriage is honourable in all. Here we might ask, Why has the Romish Church made matrimony one of her seven sacraments, and not rather celibacy, if celibacy is more meritorious? We further observe, that in the *Liturgy of our Lady of Loretto*, the Virgin Mary is styled "Holy Mother of God; Mother of our Creator; Seat of wisdom; Cause of our joy; Queen of angels, patriarchs, apostles, martyrs, confessors"—no fewer than forty-four characters, many of which are far more than divine, which are ascribed to the wife of Joseph. "In the days of Cyril, she was styled Queen of Heaven, and Mother of God, and so decreed to be in the councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon; and Cyril himself, who presided in the council of Ephesus, made no scruple to call her the Complement or Supplement of the holy Trinity."* But what, if possible, is yet harder of digestion, is what this Popish writer has said of the Christian's one Mediator, under his 28th meditation, viz., "That from the first moment of his conception in the womb of his blessed mother, till his expiring on the cross, his soul was ever employed in adoring, glorifying, blessing, and loving his heavenly Father, and in offering himself to his will." If nature, reason, and the truth of things be consulted, a greater insult upon the human understanding cannot be imagined; but, if viewed in the light of revelation, it is beyond conception offensive and untrue. St. Luke most aptly and expressly says, that "the child Jesus, increased in wisdom and in stature, and also in favour with God and man." Nor does it appear that he was qualified for the execution of his divine mission, or that he had a knowledge of what it was intended to be, till after the spirit of God descended upon him, when he was baptized of John, his harbinger. In every credible report made of him in the New Testament, he appears to have been in all things made like unto his brethren. But it is not much to be wondered at, if a priest who pretends to

* See Ben Mordecai's Apology, Letter VII. p. 148.—N. B. Cyril persecuted Nestorius, in the fourth century, because he would not allow Mary to have been the Mother of God.

transmute or convert a wafer into a man, should presume to gain on the credulity of mankind in this excess of absurdity. I beg leave to conclude with only this his priestly direction; "In order to adduce reception of the consecrated wafer, the person must be *fasting* at least from midnight, by command of the Church, and by a most ancient and apostolical tradition; for in reverence to so great a sacrament, nothing should enter into the body of a Christian before the body of Christ."

VECTIS.

INTELLIGENCE.

Anniversary of Welburn Sunday-school.

On Monday, May the 8th, the Second Anniversary of the Welburn Sunday-school was held at the Unitarian Chapel in that place; when a sermon was preached to a very good audience, by one of the students from Manchester College, York. As on the first anniversary, the remaining part of the afternoon was spent in the enjoyment of social pleasures. The children first took tea, and afterwards their teachers, together with the patrons and friends of the institution. Of the former, there were nearly sixty, and of the latter, about seventy, several of whom were from York and Malton. Among our York friends, was one of our highly respected tutors, the Rev. W. Turner, Jun., whose presence was truly gratifying to all assembled, and whose sentiments added considerably to the pleasures of the evening. The leading topics to which the speakers confined their remarks were, the Abolition of Slavery—the Rights of the Catholics—and the Unitarian Marriage Bill. Each of these, it was impressively stated, rests on the broad basis of the right of private judgment in religious matters, and on that sacred liberty, which is as dear as life itself. The duty of petitioning Parliament on each of these subjects, was also urged. Judging from the fixed attention and deep interest evinced by the villagers of Welburn, these are to them sacred topics, whose value they appreciate, and whose transmission to their latest posterity they wish to secure. Certain, however, am I, that in point of enlightened liberality, they have proceeded far beyond some who pride themselves upon their residence in cities. Be it stated to their everlasting credit, that not one voice was raised in favour of illiberality, nor the whisper of disapprobation heard, though the rights of conscience and humanity were defended on principles to which those never resort who stifle, in the cry of custom, of passion, or of interest, the voice of suffering humanity. I should ill perform the office of reporter, were I to close the

present intelligence, without advertent to the native talent which was displayed during the evening. Two individuals addressed the Meeting, who, notwithstanding daily labour in their regular avocations, have devoted much of their leisure time to the education of the young, and the dissemination of Unitarian views of Christianity. That they have talents and cultivation of mind suited to the discharge of their duties as Sunday-school teachers, was evident from the mental improvement and general habits of the children; and that they are not destitute of the leading qualifications for the other part of their office, was obvious from the good sense, unaffected simplicity, sound judgment, ready utterance and Christian fervour, which characterized their speeches. When I add, that they seemed fully aware of the importance of the acquisition of general knowledge; that they exhibited correct views on scriptural subjects, and clearly stated the importance of their chapel library to themselves as a Christian society, and to their fellow-Christians who wish to know the grounds of Unitarianism; and that they disclaimed every hostile feeling to those who differ from them—the readers of the Reformer will still have but a very inadequate idea of the pleasure, and instruction too, which many who have had more liberal educations than they, but will never have a more willing mind to be useful in their day and generation, derived from their speeches.

As many of our friends came from a considerable distance, the Meeting closed at an early hour, when several expressed their intention of being present at the third anniversary, and of inducing others to join in pleasures similar to those which had on that occasion far exceeded their warmest expectations.

Having communicated some pleasing intelligence to your readers, perhaps they will allow me to suggest a few thoughts.

There are villages, if not towns, in which similar meetings would be productive of equal pleasure and improvement.

The anniversary of a Tract Society, or a Sunday-school, tends, in an especial manner, to cherish that social spirit which distinguished the first Christians, and to which they were in a considerable degree indebted for their own firmness in the hour of persecution, and the ultimate establishment of Christianity. Is it not at such meetings that we feel ourselves allied to each other by a common interest, and are impelled to exertions which but for their existence would never have been made?

There is another result arising from such social intercourse, which those who wish success to our common cause, and are not too fastidious as to the mode by which its interests may be promoted, must hail with pleasure. It is this: as we have in our societies native talent, and minds well cultivated, some, under their happy influence, would be animated to exertion, and lend themselves to the cause of education, and the diffusion of primitive Christianity. The principles of the most popular party

of the present day, unpatronized by the great, and inereely tolerated by law, were once confined to the breasts of a few; nor would the sentiments of the indefatigable Wesley have been now triumphant, had not that wise founder cherished in his followers the social spirit to its greatest extent

J. KETLEY.

Opening of the Unitarian Chapel at Radford, near Nottingham.

ON Friday, May 12th, the above place was opened for Divine worship, by a service in the evening, conducted by the Rev. J. G. Robberds, of Manchester. The same gentleman preached in behalf of the same object on the following Lord's-day, at the Chapel on the High Pavement, Nottingham, and again in the evening at Radford; when collections were made after each service towards defraying the expenses of the building. The impression produced on this occasion was most satisfactory and gratifying: the highly appropriate character of the different discourses, the serious earnestness with which they were delivered, and that evangelical spirit of genuine Christianity which pervaded them throughout—which seeks, above all things, the salvation and moral improvement of mankind, and considers a purer form of faith as chiefly valuable as it may be found to promote in a higher and stronger degree that holiness without which, no man can see the Lord—all contributed highly to gratify a very attentive auditory: and while it again stimulated them to renewed and liberal exertions, left impressions of a higher kind on the mind, which we believe and hope will not soon be obliterated.

The friends and supporters of the above Chapel must now trust to the liberality of their friends at a distance, to enable them to discharge the debt which yet remains upon it.

Eastern Unitarian Society.

The Yearly Meeting of this Society will be held at Norwich, on Wednesday and Thursday, the 5th and 6th July. The Rev. Dr. Hutton, of Leeds, will preach on Thursday morning; after which, the business of the Society will be transacted. The members and friends of the Society will dine together at the Maid's-Head Inn.

WILLIAM NEWSON, Secretary.

The Anniversary of the Kent and Sussex Unitarian Christian Association, will be holden at Maidstone, on Wednesday, the 28th June, when the Rev. J. GILCHRIST is expected to preach.

J. G., Secretary.

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[Vol. XII.]

Mr. Rutt on Milton's Treatise of Christian Doctrine.

SIR,

Clapton, May 24, 1826.

WHEN, on the first appearance of Milton's "*Treatise of Christian Doctrine*," I proposed to offer you some account of a work rendered interesting not only by its subject, but by the character of its author and the circumstances of its long concealment and accidental discovery, I designed especially to gratify those of your readers who would not be likely to have convenient access to that publication. They would, I thought, be peculiarly interested by Milton's scriptural criticisms, some of them now found to have been unconsciously adopted by later scholars, who, like him, were happily prepared to present all their human learning a free-will offering at the sacred shrine of Christian Truth.

I, indeed, little expected, when venturing on an examination of the *Treatise*, to be now, after so many months, still inviting attention to the 5th chapter. I have, however, felt, and I trust your readers have not generally been unconscious of the feeling, that Milton's contributions to your former pages have not been ill-adapted to the laudable design of the *Christian Reformer*. Unless I have deceived myself, they are eminently calculated to interest and to edify those who, dissatisfied with the "many inventions" which man has "sought out," would recur, with implicit confidence, to the divine testimony concerning truth, revealed in the Scriptures.

I left Milton (p. 127) examining the various passages in the Epistolary writings of the New Testament, adduced by Trinitarians in support of their theology. He had considered *Titus* ii. 13, and thence took occasion to describe those explicit declarations which the Scriptures may be expected to contain, rather than forced, and therefore unsatisfactory inferences, when teaching "a primary article of faith." He proceeds to "1 *John* iii. 16," adopting that Greek text which was used in the Latin *Vulgate*, and which our Authorized Version correctly renders, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us."

VOL. XII.

T

Yet Milton remarks, that "the Syriac Version reads *illius* instead of *Dei*," adding, "it remains to be seen whether other manuscripts do the same." Dr. (now Bishop) Sumner instances "the Ethiopic Version."

Milton does not appear, on this occasion, to have examined the editions of the Greek Testament, extant in his time, so fully as might have been expected. He, however, contends that, supposing the reading adopted in the Authorized Version should be genuine, "the pronoun *he* seems not to be referred to God, but to the Son of God." This he concludes "from a comparison of the former chapters of this epistle," &c., and "by analogy from many other passages. Nor is it extraordinary," he adds, "that by the phrase, *his life*, should be understood the life of his beloved Son, since we are ourselves in the habit of calling any much-loved friend by the title of life, or part of our life, as a term of endearment in familiar discourse."

The passage, 1 *John* iii. 16, appears, in Milton's age, to have been more regarded by Trinitarians than at present. It was, indeed, first brought to their aid in England by King James's translators. The Version of 1591, which I have quoted (pp. 30, &c.), and of 1596, reads, "Hereby have wee perceived love, that he layde down his life for us." This translation, rejected by King James's learned, rather than impartial divines, is sustained by Castalio's Latin Version, and by nearly all editions of the Greek Testament. Dr. Lardner remarks, (*Works*, V. 215,) that "our English translation of the former part of this verse is unsupported by any good authority." Mr. Belsham (*Calm Enquiry*, p. 231) says, "The word *Θεοῦ*, of *God*, has the authority of one manuscript only, and that of little note, of the Vulgate Version, and of the Complutensian edition. It is unquestionably spurious, and is left out of Griesbach's corrected text, and of Archbishop Newcome's, Mr. Wakefield's, and the Improved Version's."

I have before me a Greek Testament published in 1768, by an Editor who is honoured with a long List of Subscribers, chiefly clergymen, and including nearly all the English prelacy. His preface closes with a declaration, that if any thing appears contrary to the analogy of faith or the doctrine of the Church of England, he is disposed to unsay it. Yet on 1 *John* iii. 16, supplying the word *Christi* in a note, he adopts the generally-approved reading which Griesbach has since confirmed; thus virtually

calling in question the critical judgment or the strict integrity of King James's translators, after whom the priests of his Church commanded, at their peril, to call upon the abused people, whenever 1 *John* iii. 16 occurs in the lesson for the day, to believe that *God laid down his life*; a gross, if not blasphemous notion, which very few hearers, probably, are prepared to qualify by Milton's ingenious solution. Thus slowly does scriptural knowledge flow out to the people through the channel of "the best constituted Church;" while *Bible Societies*, allowing themselves in a *pious fraud*, unworthy of their honourable purpose, still circulate the occasionally incorrect, if not sometimes unfaithful Authorized Version, with its *leading* head-lines and contents, as "the pure word of God, without note or comment." I return to the *Treatise*, where Milton thus proceeds to dispute with Trinitarians their further claim to support from this Epistle, attributed to "the disciple whom Jesus loved;" and whom all Christians must regard as the least likely of any disciple to misunderstand his Master's doctrine, or to disparage his dignity.

"But the passage which is considered most important of all is 1 *John* v., part of the 20th verse; for if the whole be taken, it will not prove what it is adduced to support: *We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, (even) in his Son Jesus Christ: this is the true God and eternal life. For we are in him that is true in his Son, that is, so far as we are in the Son of him that is true: this is the true God*; namely, he who was just before called *him that was true*, the word *God* being omitted in the one clause and subjoined in the other. For he it is that is *he that is true*, (whom that we might know, *we know that the Son of God is come and hath given us an understanding*,) not he who is called *the Son of him that is true*, though that be the nearest antecedent, for common sense itself requires that the article *this* should be referred to *him that is true*, (to whom the subject of the context principally relates,) not to *the Son of him that is true*."

Milton adds, that "examples of a similar construction are not wanting," and refers to "*Acts* iv. 10, 11, and x. 16; 2 *Thess.* ii. 8, 9; 2 *John* 7, and *John* xvii." Bishop Sumner remarks, that Milton's is "the interpretation of

Benson, Wetstein, Schleusner, Macknight," &c., and refers "in support of the other construction" to "Beza, Whitby, and particularly Waterland."

This reference to *Whitby* is, I think, somewhat disparaging to the theological reputation of the learned translator. He has, I have no doubt, correctly referred to the *Commentary* of Whitby, which I have not now an opportunity of consulting. But that Bishop Sumner should never have read, or should have forgotten, the *Last Thoughts* of that learned clergyman, which I mentioned, (XI. 426,) is passing strange. Yet with that work in recollection, I cannot allow myself to suppose that he could have referred to Whitby as, on this passage, opposed to Milton, with whose conclusions Whitby's became, at length, strictly in accordance.

When just closing a learned and laborious life, at the age of 88, as if

The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,
Let in new light through chinks that time had made,

Whitby prepared for the press, though he did not survive to publish, his *Last Thoughts*, which, as the writer of *Paul an Unitarian* has well remarked (p. 46), will "remain an imperishable monument of his religious integrity, and confirmed belief in the Unitarian, in opposition to the Trinitarian doctrine." Whitby introduces the work by remarking, after *Justin Martyr*, "that an exact scrutiny into things doth often produce conviction, that those things which we once judged to be right, are, after a more diligent inquiry into truth, found to be far otherwise." This opinion he proceeds to confirm by the following ingenuous confession: "And truly I am not ashamed to say, *this is my very case*. For when I wrote my *Commentaries on the New Testament*, I went on (too hastily I own) in the common beaten road of other reputed *Orthodox* divines: conceiving, that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, in one complex notion, were one and the same God, by virtue of the same *individual* essence communicated from the Father. This confused notion I am now fully convinced—to be a thing impossible, and full of gross *absurdities* and *contradictions*."

Proceeding to reconsider the chief passages which he "had produced" in the *Commentary*, "for confirmation of

the doctrine" which he "there too hastily endeavoured to establish," he thus remarkably corroborates the apostolic doctrine which Milton deduces from the same passage :

"That *the true God*, mentioned 1 John v. 20, is not the Son, but the Father, who by our Saviour is styled *the only true God*, is proved from the ancient reading of these words, thus : 'The Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know the true God; and we are in his true Son, Jesus Christ.' This God, of whom the Son of God hath given us this knowledge, (as our Lord hath told us, *John* xvii. 3,) 'is the true God, and the knowledge of him is eternal life.' Thus the disciple accords well with his Master, and only teacheth what he had learned from him."

You will, I trust, excuse this digression, if, indeed, I have not sufficiently connected Milton and Whitby, both pious and learned inquirers after divine truth, and alike prepared to sacrifice to its promotion their most favourite early opinions. Returning to the *Treatise*, I find the author considering the objection, "that according to some of the texts quoted before, Christ is God;" and that "if the Father be the only true God, Christ is not the true God." Milton replies, "We are not obliged to say of Christ what the Scriptures do not say. The Scriptures call him *God*, but not *him that is the true God*; why are we not at liberty to acquiesce in the same distinction?" I have stated (p. 32) what appears to have been Milton's design when he called our Saviour *God*, as a name of dignity, not unworthily applied to the most favoured Son and Servant of the Most High. He next proceeds to consider a passage in which Paul describes our Saviour's dignity and depression. It has, I believe, been generally numbered by the *Orthodox* among the strongest holds of the *Trinitarian* faith; though, as probably many of your readers have observed in the *Discourse* on that passage to which I very lately referred, it appears on a scriptural examination to be strictly Unitarian.

"They also adduce *Philipp.* ii. 6, *Who being in the form of God*. But this no more proves him to be God, than the phrase which follows, *took upon him the form of a servant*, proves that he was really a servant, as the sacred writers no where use the word *form* for actual being. But if it be contended that the *form of God* is here taken in a philosophical sense for the essential form, the consequence

cannot be avoided, that when Christ laid aside the form, he laid aside also the substance and the efficiency of God.—*To be in the form of God*, therefore, seems to be synonymous with being in the image of God; which is often predicated of Christ, even as man is also said, though in a much lower sense, to be the image of God, and to be in the image of God, that is, by creation." Much in the manner of Milton, it is remarked by Wakefield in his *Enquiry* (p. 185), that "this form must consist in no equality or similitude of essence, but in mental endowments, in some communicable properties, in something that can be participated in common by mankind, by Jesus, and by God."

In a further part of this chapter, having been proving how "the Son himself professes to have received from the Father all that pertains to his own being," Milton thus returns to the consideration of this passage:

"Christ therefore, having received all these things from the Father, and *being in the form of God*, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, namely, because he had obtained them by gift, not by robbery. For if this passage imply his co-equality with the Father, it rather refutes than proves his unity of essence; since equality cannot exist but between two or more essences." Thus Milton's contemporary *Crellius*, in his Work *De Uno Deo Patre*, remarks, (B. i. S. ii. Ch. xxxvi.,) "If Christ be equal to God, in respect of essence and essential properties, the essence of Christ must of necessity be different from the essence of God. Wherefore they must either hold two divine independent essences, or two Most High Gods, or that Christ is not the Most High God."

Milton proceeds to argue that the phrases, *he did not think it, he made himself of no reputation*, (literally, *he emptied himself*,) appear inapplicable to the Supreme God. For *to think*, is nothing else than to entertain an opinion, which cannot be properly said of God (*Opinio autem in Deo non cadit*). This Milton attributes, in his *Artis Logicæ Institutio*, as quoted by his translator, to the Deity's absolutely universal knowledge (*quia per causas æque omnia cognoscit*). "Nor can the infinite God," he adds, "be said to empty himself, any more than to contradict himself; for infinity and emptiness are opposite terms."

In thus examining "the principal texts which are brought forward to prove the divinity of the Son," Milton arrives

at "the last passage, from *Jude* ver. 4, denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Who will not agree," he remarks, "that this is too verbose a mode of description, if all these words are intended to apply to one person? Or who would not rather conclude, on a comparison of many other passages which tend to confirm the same opinion, that they were spoken of two persons, namely, the Father, the only God, and our Lord Jesus Christ?" He then proceeds to "the passages quoted in the New Testament from the Old," from which Trinitarians would infer the Deity of Christ. But these considerations I must postpone to another opportunity.

J. T. RUTT.

My Father's at the Helm.

[Verses from St. James's Chronicle, January 10, 1826.]

THE curling waves, with awful roar,
A little bark assail'd ;
And pallid Fear's distracting power
O'er all on board prevail'd—

Save one, the Captain's darling child,
Who steadfast view'd the storm ;
And cheerful, with composre, smiled
At danger's threat'ning form.

"And sport'st thou thus," a seaman cried,
"While terrors overwhelm?"
"Why should I fear?" the boy replied,
"*My Father's at the Helm.*"

So when our worldly all is rest,
Our earthly helper's gone,
We still have one sure anchor left—
God helps, and He alone.

He to our prayers will bend his ear,
He, give our pangs relief ;
He, turn to smiles each trembling tear,
To joy each tort'ring grief.

Then turn to Him, 'mid sorrows wild,
When wants and woes o'erwhelm ;
Rememb'ring, like the fearless child,
Our Father's at the helm.

*Letter from Mr. Armstrong to Mr. Gurney, the Quaker,
upon a Trinitarian Discourse of his at Taunton.*

SIR,

Taunton, May 19, 1826.

By the request of many of your readers I send you the following letter, which was handed to Mr. J. J. Gurney, of Norwich, in consequence of his delivering a discourse, the principal part of which appeared to me directed against the religious sentiments of Unitarian Christians. In conclusion he endeavoured to impress on the minds of his numerous audience, that the Friends were believers in the generally-received Orthodox notions of the Trinity. But Clarkson, their historian, and many other competent judges, are, I believe, of a different opinion. Indeed, I have long had the satisfaction of being on terms of intimacy with several intelligent members of their society, and have attended almost every meeting (when the public have been invited) for the last ten years; but I never before heard them *defend* the doctrine of the Trinity either in public or in private. I ought, perhaps, to add, that I received a long and friendly reply from Mr. Garney, which of course I ought not to publish without obtaining his consent; in this he declines entering into a controversy on the subject, but refers me to his *Essays on the Evidences and Doctrines of Christianity*. This work, which is strictly Athanasian, I hope will soon be noticed by your respectable correspondent N. in the *Monthly Repository*.

J. ARMSTRONG.

SIR,

Taunton, April 23, 1826.

I have this evening attended public worship at the Friends' meeting, and I trust that I have listened with seriousness and attention to your discourse on some of the doctrines of Christianity, in which I have long felt a lively interest; but as I differ from some of your conclusions, and as you appear to me not well acquainted with the real sentiments of Unitarians, against whom some of your remarks were evidently directed, I hope you will excuse the liberty I have taken in thus addressing you.

In the first place I beg to assure you that we do not set up our reason above revelation; if the doctrine of the Trinity, or the two natures of Christ, were *clearly revealed* in scripture, however incomprehensible or contradictory to reason, we should in these, as in the doctrine of a resurrection, bow with submission.

Nor is the appellation *mere* man, which you repeated more than once, applicable to our views of the Saviour: we believe in the divinity of his mission, but not in his Deity. Nay, I will go further and say, that in scriptural language he may be called a god, because the Apostle John says, that those were called gods to whom the word of God came. Moses was called a god, Exodus vii. 1: "See," says Jehovah, "I have made thee a god, and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet." We believe of Christ that he was chosen from among his brethren by *his* Father and *our* Father, by *his* God and *our* God; that he was greater than Moses or any other prophet; that he performed miracles which a *mere* man, without the especial assistance of God, could not perform. Still, as we cannot conceive of two Gods, we say with the Apostle, "that he was a man approved of God, by signs and miracles, which God did by him."

I wish, Sir, that you could see on paper the various passages of Scripture which you quoted; how opposite and contradictory! Sometimes you represented Christ as the Eternal* Son, and then as born of a virgin. Sometimes you represented him as God over all, Creator of the world and all things therein; and then you said that God *had* *highly exalted him*, and given him a name above every other name, &c. You represented him as all-wise, and yet he declared, when speaking of the day of judgment, "Of that day knoweth no man; *not even the Son*, nor the angels; but the Father only." You represented him as possessing all power, both in heaven and on earth; and yet, when solicited by the mother that her two sons might sit, the one on his right hand and the other on his left in his kingdom, he says, "To sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." I might go on, but I hope I have said sufficient to recall your serious attention to the subject. That there is but one God, that he *created* Christ, and gave him all the power which he possessed, is my most deliberate conviction: this seems

* "To speak of the Eternal Sonship of Christ," says Dr. Adam Clarke, (a learned Trinitarian in the Methodist connexion,) "is nonsense; for if he is, a Son he must have had a beginning, and therefore was not eternal."

accordant with the whole tenor of Scripture. The Trinitarian may continue to talk

“—about essence and substance, and no one knows what;
 God either made Christ, or else he did not;
 If he did, he's a creature, 'tis plain at first view;
 If not, he's a God, and then we have *two*.”

If Christ was really God, I cannot account for the fact, that after our Lord's ascension, after the day of Pentecost, when one should naturally suppose that the doctrine of the two natures, the Trinity and the like opinions, which are now adored as mysteries, and a belief in which is so often insisted upon as essential to salvation—I say, I cannot account for it, that Luke and the other apostles, who wrote *after this time*, should have expressed themselves in a manner so ambiguous, and in general so contradictory to the alleged fact.

I believe that it is generally admitted by all parties, that the disciples of our Lord considered that he was a man, and as to his *nature* nothing more than man; that one betrayed him, another denied him, and all forsook him and fled. Now it appears to me that if, in after time, it had been revealed to them that Christ was what he is now, represented to be, they would have been so struck with amazement, that the beginning, the middle, and the end of all their discourses would have been, that Jesus of Nazareth, whom we always considered as a man like ourselves, was no other than the very and eternal God, the Maker of heaven and earth. But how different is the case! They continue to speak of him as a man appointed by God, as distinct from God. “There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”

My time, Sir, will not permit me to refer to the stress which you laid on the phrases “Emmanuel, God with us;” “In the beginning was the word,” &c.; but I take the liberty to enclose a work of Dr. Carpenter's, in which you will learn our views of these and many similar passages. At some future time you can return it to my friend Rebecca Russell, at Priscilla Gurney's, Bath, or to Mr. John Young, of this town. Soliciting your pardon for this intrusion, I subscribe myself, Sir,

Yours in Christian affection,

J. ARMSTRONG.

Lines on a Tomb-stone.

SIR,

June 6, 1826.

THE following beautiful lines were copied, a few weeks since, from a tomb-stone in *Brockdish Churchyard, Norfolk*, raised to the memory of an amiable girl, aged ten years. Should you deem them worthy of a place in the forthcoming Number of your valuable little work, I think they cannot fail of proving highly interesting to your numerous readers.

A CONSTANT READER.

Blighted, like some fair flower, in early bloom,
 She fades beneath the winter of the tomb;
 Yet, shall one thought our rising grief restrain,
 The time will come when she shall rise again;
 When Christ shall raise her consecrated clay,
 And finish nature, never to decay.

A Story for the Enemies of Free Trade and of the Improvement of Mechanics.

[From "Narrative of a Journey into Khorasan, by J. B. Fraser, author of a Tour in the Himālā Mountains." P. 190. 4to. 1825. £3. 3s.]

It is not long ago since a native of Fars succeeded in making certain improvements in pottery, so far as to manufacture a species of porcelain resembling tolerable China ware. His fame quickly spread, and soon reached the court. When the king heard it he dispatched an order for the man to repair directly to Terhān to make china for the *Shah*. The poor fellow was seized with consternation at this order, for he knew that, not only should he have to work for the Shah, but for all his officers and courtiers; while so far from being paid, he would probably not receive enough to keep body and soul together. He accordingly went to court, not to make china, but mustering every thing he could raise for a bribe to the minister, he besought him to report to the king that he was not the man that made the china; that the real potter had run away nobody knew where, and that *he* himself was thus erroneously placed in restraint, and prayed that he might obtain his release. The minister soon sent him his discharge, and the man left the capital for his own country, fervently vowing never to make a bit of china, or attempting im-

provement of any sort as long as he lived. It is a common practice thus to kidnap the best workmen in all trades for the use of the court and great men of the provinces, who seldom or never pay for such matters. Thus every one rather avoids the reputation of excellence in any but the commonest trades; and thus the conduct of the government and its officers strikes directly at the root of all improvement and useful invention.

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Letter of Mr. Wright's, preparatory to his First Missionary Visit to Scotland.

SIR,

IT will no doubt be recollected by many of the readers of the Rev. R. Wright's *Missionary Life and Labours*, that when about to take his mission into Scotland, fearing lest the Scotch people should have their expectation too much raised before they saw and heard him, and that his appearance, voice and talents would not be such as they anticipated, and that their disappointment would prove injurious to the cause, he wrote a letter to inform them what kind of person they were to expect to find him. (Pp. 265, 266.) This letter I have often wished to see, and having lately been favoured with a copy of it, cannot deny myself the pleasure of transmitting it to you, being persuaded that the readers of your useful *Miscellany* will be as much gratified with the perusal of it as I was.

B.

To Mr. Purden, Glasgow.

DEAR SIR,

Wisbeach, June 30, 1809.

BEING appointed by the Committee of the Unitarian Fund to visit our northern brethren as a missionary, I shall, if God permit, begin the journey on Monday next. Having several places to visit in my way through England, it will be near a fortnight after I set out before I can reach Glasgow. The first Sunday in July I have engaged to spend at Chester, where Mr. Lyons now resides. Then I think of proceeding to Liverpool, and of taking coach from thence to Glasgow. I hope to arrive at Glasgow on Friday the 14th or Saturday the 15th of July. I intend spending eight Lord's days in Scotland.

In your country I am a total stranger, and have no personal acquaintance there, unless it be one person at

Edinburgh. I can make no appointments until I arrive at your town, where of course I shall spend the first Lord's-day. I shall wish to visit and preach in as many towns as I can, with any prospect of success. I shall not wish to waste my time in going to places where no prospect of doing good can be perceived, only I wish it to be known that I care not how often I preach, nor how much I am employed. The object is to do all the good we possibly can, in promoting the cause of pure and primitive Christianity. I reckon on the co-operation of the brethren I shall find in Scotland, in my efforts and endeavours to promote the glorious cause in which we are embarked, during my short stay in your country.

In various parts of England, and in Wales, rational Christianity is making rapid progress; the accounts Mr. Lyons brought us from Scotland, gratified and animated us all. We rejoice that a part of the island, celebrated for seriousness, attention to religion, learning and hospitality, as Scotland is, admits into several of its towns the Unitarian doctrine; greatly will it rejoice my heart if I be so happy as to contribute to its success and spread there, by the labours I may undertake in my proposed journey. I certainly have long wished to see our Northern brethren, and I hope soon to have my spirit refreshed among them. May God prepare and enable me to come among you in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of his Son Jesus, and make our interviews abundantly edifying!

In expecting me, do not look for a man of figure, with sonorous voice, whose outward appearance will recommend him; but expect a person of diminutive stature, a plain man, who has nothing to recommend him but the truth, which to the utmost of his ability he will cheerfully communicate with plainness and fidelity, both in public and private, in defence of which he is willing to pass through evil report and good report, to promote which he will rejoice to labour in season and out of season. I shall be glad, when not engaged in public, to visit and converse with any friends who will receive me; but I wish it to be every where known, that I want no entertainment but what is most simple and cheap. I have been in the habit of travelling much among the poor, of partaking with them of their homely fare, seasoned by friendship and Christian conversation, of sleeping in the mud-walled cottage, sometimes on a clay floor, and open to the thatch above. I

usually perform my journeys on foot. Our object in missionary journeys is, and ought to be, to avoid unnecessary expense, and to put those among whom we go to as little expense and trouble as possible. I never wish to be entertained like a gentleman, but as a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, employed in preaching his gospel to the poor; and wherever I find a homely bed, or mattress, and a little plain food, I have enough, and am satisfied and comfortable.

Thus far I have thought it not improper to speak of myself, that the poorest brethren, as well as those in better circumstances, may be informed they will be put to no inconvenience in receiving a Unitarian Missionary to their houses. In free conversation among Christians I delight, and always reckon, when travelling, on doing as much good by conversation as by public preaching.

Not having leisure to add more, I remain, dear Sir, very truly and respectfully, your Christian Friend and Brother,
R. WRIGHT.

*Harris's Natural History of the Bible.**

WE have in this volume a valuable compilation, the substance of many works on the "Natural History of the Bible." It is one of those books by which America is repaying us for the knowledge and learning borrowed from Europe. Out of a considerable catalogue of original works derived from this side of the water, Dr. Harris has selected a great deal of useful and interesting matter. We are pleased to see his book reprinted here, and at a price which brings it within the reach of a great many readers. In the same number of pages we know of no work which contains so much real instruction on the customs of the Jews, and the productions, &c. of Eastern countries. But we shall give the reader an opportunity of judging for himself by a few extracts.

At the end of a "Dissertation on the Mosaical Distinc-

* The Natural History of the Bible; a Description of all the Quadrupeds, Birds, Fishes, Reptiles and Insects, Trees, Plants, Flowers, Gums and Precious Stones, mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures. Collected from the best Authorities, and Alphabetically Arranged. By Thaddeus Mason Harris, D. D., of Dorchester, Massachusetts. London, Reprinted for Fogg, Cheapside. 8vo. pp. 462. 1824. 10s. 6d.

tion of Animals into Clean and Unclean," is the following Catalogue of forbidden Birds, in English Metre, extracted from the *Bibliotheca Biblica*, III. 142, ed. 4to, 1725, where it is printed in the old black letter.

"Of feathred Foules that fanne the bucksom aire,
Not all alike weare made for foode to Men,
For, these thou shalt not eat doth God declare,
Twice tenne their nombre, and their flesh uncleane:
Fyrst the great *Eagle*, byrde of feigned Iove,
Which Thebanes worshippe and diviners love,

"Next *Ossifrage* and *Ospray* (both one kinde),
Of luxurie and rapine, emblems mete,
That haunte the shores, the choicest preye to finde,
And brast the bones, and scoope the marrowe swete:
The *Vulture* void of delicace and feare,
Who spareth not the pale dede man to teare:

"The tall-built *Swann*, faire type of pride confest;
The *Pelican*, whose sons are nurst with bloode,
Forbidd to man! she stabbeth deep her breast,
Self-murtheresse through fondnesse to hir broode,
They too that range the thirstie wilds emong,
The *Ostryches*, unthoughtful of their yonge.

"The *Raven* ominous (as Gentiles holde),
What time she croaketh hoarsely à la morte;
The *Hawke*, aerial hunter, swifte and bolde,
In feates of mischief trayned for disporte;
The vocale *Cuckowe*, of the faulcon race,
Obscene intruder in her neighbor's place:

"The *Owle* demure, who loveth not the lighte
(Ill semblance she of wisdom to the Greeke);
The smallest fould' dradd foe, the coward *Kite*,
And the stille *Herne*, arresting fishes meeke;
The glutton *Cormorante*, of sullen moode,
Regarding no distinction in his foode.

"The *Storke*, which dwelleth on the fir-tree topp,
And trusteth that no power shall hir dismaye,
As Kinges, on their high stations place thir hope,
Nor wist that there be higher farr than theye;
The gay *Gier-Eagle*, beautifull to viewe,
Bearyng within a savage herte untrew:

“ The *Ibis* whome in Egypte Israel found,
 Fell byrd ! that living serpents can digest ;
 The crested *Lapwyng*, wailing shrill arounde,
 Solicitous, with no contentment blest ;
 Last the foul *Batt*, of byrd and beast first bredde,
 Flitting with littel leathren sailes dispredded.”

According to the following account, the far-famed Cedar, the pride of Lebanon, is yielding to the destructive tooth of Time.

“ The cedar is a large and noble evergreen tree. Its lofty height, and its far extended branches, afford a spacious shelter and shade. Ezek. xxxi. 5, 6, 8. The wood is very valuable ; is of a reddish colour, of an aromatic smell, and reputed incorruptible, which is owing to its bitter taste, which the worms cannot endure, and its resin, which preserves it from the injuries of the weather.* The ark of the covenant, and much of the temple of Solomon, and that of Diana, at Ephesus, were built of cedar.

“ The tree is much celebrated in Scripture. It is called ‘ the glory of Lebanon.’ Isa. lx. 13. On that mountain it must in former times have flourished in great abundance. There are some now growing there which are prodigiously large. But travellers who have visited the place within these two or three centuries, and who describe the trees of vast size, inform us, that their number is diminished greatly ; so that, as Isaiah, x. 19, says, ‘ a child may number them.’† Maundrel measured one of the largest size,

* Some cedar wood was found fresh in the temple of Utica, in Barbary, above two thousand years old.

† Peter Bellon in 1550 counted	28
Chr. Fishtner....	1556 .. 25
Rauwolf.....	1574 .. 26
J. Jacobi	1579 .. 26
R. Radzivil	1583 .. 24
J. Villamont	1590 .. 24
Ch. Harant	1598 .. 24
W. Litgow.....	1609 .. 24
Eugen. Roger ..	1632 .. 22
Boullaye le Gouz	1650 .. 22
Thevenot	1657 .. 22
De la Roque	1688 .. 20
Maundrel	1699 .. 16
R. Pocock	1739 .. 15
Schulz	1755 .. 20
Volney	1784, only 4 or 5 from report.
Billardiére	1789 .. 7

and found it to be twelve yards and six inches in girth, and yet sound; and thirty-seven yards in the spread of its boughs. Gabriel Sionita, a very learned Syrian Maronite,* who assisted in editing the Paris Polyglott, a man worthy of all credit, thus describes the cedars of Mount Lebanon, which he had examined on the spot. 'The cedar grows on the most elevated part of the mountain, is taller than the pine, and so thick that five men together could scarcely fathom one. It shoots out its branches at ten or twelve feet from the ground; they are large and distant from each other, and are perpetually green. The wood is of a brown colour, very solid and incorruptible, if preserved from wet. The tree bears a small cone like that of the pine.'

"The following is the account given of these cedars by the Abbé Binos, who visited them in the year 1778. 'Here I first discovered the celebrated cedars, which grow in an oval plain about an Italian mile in circumference. The largest stand at a considerable distance from each other, as if afraid their branches might be entangled. These trees raise their proud summits to the height of sixty, eighty, and a hundred feet. Three or four, when young, grow up sometimes together, and form at length, by uniting their sap, a tree of monstrous thickness. The trunk then assumes, generally, a square form. The thickness which I saw might be about thirty feet round; and this size was occasioned by several having been united when young. Six others, which are entirely insulated, and free from shoots, were much taller, and seem to have been indebted for their height to the undivided effects of their sap.' These cedars, formerly so numerous as to constitute a forest, are now almost entirely destroyed. M. Billardiere, who travelled thither in 1789, says that only seven of those of superior size and antiquity remain. The largest are eighty or ninety feet in height, and the trunks from eight to nine feet in diameter. These are preserved with religious strictness. The Maronites celebrate an annual festival under them, which is called 'the feast of cedars;' and the patriarch of the order threatens with ecclesiastical censure, all who

* "*Maronites* are certain Eastern Christians who inhabit near Mount Libanus, in Syria. The name is derived from a town in the country called Maronia, or from St. Maron, who built a monastery there in the fifth century. Hannah Adams, *View of Religions*, 2d edit."

presume to hurt or diminish the venerable remnants of ages long gone by."

The *Eagle* naturally occupies a large comparative space in Dr. Harris's collections.

"The name is derived from a verb which signifies *lacerate*, or tear in pieces.

"The eagle has always been considered as the king of birds on account of its great strength, rapidity and elevation of flight, natural ferocity, and the terror it inspires into its fellows of the air. Its voracity is so great that a large extent of territory is requisite for the supply of proper sustenance; Providence has therefore constituted it a solitary animal: two pair of eagles are never found in the same neighbourhood, though the genus is dispersed through every quarter of the world. It seldom makes depredations on the habitations of mankind; preferring its own safety to the gratification of appetite. Neither does it ever make mean or inconsiderable conquests; the smaller and harmless birds being beneath its notice. It will, however, carry away a goose, or even a turkey. It has often been known to seize hares, young lambs, and kids; which latter, as well as fawns, it frequently destroys for the sake of drinking their blood, as it never drinks water in the natural state. Having slain an animal too large to be eaten at once, it devours or carries off a part, leaving the remainder for other creatures less delicate; for it never returns to feed upon the same carcass, neither will it ever devour carrion.

"Its sight is quick, strong, and piercing to a proverb.

"Jackson in his *Account of Morocco*, p. 62, says, that 'the *VULTURE* (*nesser*), except the ostrich, is the largest bird in Africa. They build their nests on lofty precipices, high rocks, and in dreary parts of the mountains. Mr. Bruce has called this bird 'the golden eagle,' but I apprehend that he has committed an error in denominating it an eagle, the generical name of which, in the Arabic language, is *El Bess*.' On the other hand, Mr. SALT, Trav. in Abyssinia, says, 'Its general appearance in a natural state, together with the vigour and animation which it displays, incline me to think it more nearly allied in the natural system to the eagles, and I should therefore be inclined to call it 'the African bearded Eagle.'

"In Job xxxix. 27, the natural history of the eagle is finely drawn up:

*“ Is it at thy voice that the eagle soars ?
And therefore maketh his nest on high ?
The rock is the place of his habitation.
He abides on the crag, the place of strength.
Thence he pounces upon his prey.
His eyes discern afar off.
Even his young ones drink down blood ;
And wherever is slaughter, there is he.*

“ Mrs. Barbauld has given a description of the eagle in the following lines :

*“ ‘ The royal bird his lonely kingdom forms
Amid the gathering clouds and sullen storms ;
Through the wide waste of air he darts his flight,
And holds his sounding pinions pois'd for sight ;
With cruel eye premeditates the war,
And marks his destined victim from afar.
Descending in a whirlwind to the ground,
His pinions like the rush of waters sound ;
The fairest of the fold he bears away,
And to the nest compels the struggling prey.’*

“ Alluding to the popular opinion that the eagle assists its feeble young in their flight, by bearing them up on its own pinions, Moses represents Jehovah as saying, *Exod. xix. 4*, ‘ Ye have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself.’

“ When Balaam, *Numb. xxiv. 21*, delivered his predictions respecting the fate that awaited the nations which he then particularized, he said of the Kenites, ‘ Strong is thy dwelling, and thou puttest thy nest in the rock ;’ alluding to that princely bird, the eagle, which not only delights in soaring to the loftiest heights, but chooses the highest rocks, and most elevated mountains as desirable situations for erecting its nest. *Comp. Hab. ii. 9, Obad. 4.*

“ What Job says concerning the eagle, which is to be understood in a literal sense, ‘ Where the slain are, there is he,’ our Saviour makes an allegory of, when he says, *Matt. xxiv. 28*, ‘ Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together ;’ that is, wherever the Jews are, who deal unfaithfully with God, there will also the Romans, who bore the eagle in their standard, be to execute vengeance upon them. *Comp. Luke xvii. 37.*

“ The swiftness of the flight of the eagle is alluded to in

several passages of Scripture; as Dent. xxviii. 49: 'The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from afar, from the end of the earth; as swift as the eagle flieth.' In the affecting lamentation of David over Saul and Jonathan, their impetuous and rapid career is described in forcible terms. 2 Sam. i. 23: 'They were swifter than eagles; they were stronger than lions.' Jeremiah (iv. 13), when he beheld in vision the march of Nebuchadnezzar, cried, 'Behold he shall come up as clouds, and his chariots shall be as a whirlwind. His horses are swifter than eagles. Wo unto us, for we are spoiled.' To the wide-expanded wings of the eagle, and the rapidity of his flight, the same prophet beautifully alludes in a subsequent chapter, where he describes the subversion of Moab by the same ruthless conqueror. Jer. xlviii. 40: 'Behold he shall fly as an eagle, and spread his wings over Moab.' In the same manner he describes the sudden desolations of Ammon in the next chapter; but, when he turns his eye to the ruins of his own country, he exclaims in still more energetic language, Lam. iv. 19, 'Our persecutors are swifter than the eagles of the heavens.'

"Under the same comparison, the patriarch Job describes the rapid flight of time, ix. 26: 'My days are passed away, as the eagle that hasteth to the prey.' The surprising rapidity with which the blessings of common Providence sometimes vanish from the grasp of the possessor is thus described by Solomon, Prov. xxx. 19: 'Riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle towards heaven.'

"The flight of this bird is as sublime as it is rapid and impetuous. None of the feathered race soar so high. In his daring excursions he is said to leave the clouds of heaven and regions of thunder and lightning and tempest far beneath him, and to approach the very limits of ether. Alluding to this lofty soaring is the prophecy of Obadiah, ver. 4, concerning the pride and humiliation of Moab; 'Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord.' The prophet Jeremiah, xlix. 16, pronounces the doom of Edom in similar terms: 'O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill; though thou shouldst make thy nest high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord.'

“ It has been a popular opinion, that the eagle lives and retains its vigour to a great age; and that, beyond the common lot of other birds, it moults in its old age, renews its feathers, and is restored to youthful strength again. This circumstance is mentioned in Psal. ciii. 5, and Isai. xl.

31. Whether the notion is in any degree well founded or not; we need not inquire. It is enough for a poet, whether sacred or profane, to have the authority of popular opinion to support an image introduced for illustration or ornament.

“ It is remarkable that Cyrus, compared in Isai. xli. 11, to an *eagle* (so the word translated ‘ ravenous bird’ should be rendered), is by Xenophon said to have an eagle for his ensign; using, without knowing it, the identical word of the prophet, with only a Greek termination to it. So exact is the correspondence betwixt the prophet and the historian, the prediction and the event.

“ Xenophon and other ancient historians inform us that the golden eagle with extended wings was the ensign of the Persian monarchs long before it was adopted by the Romans; and it is very probable, that the Persians borrowed the symbol from the ancient Assyrians, in whose banners it waved, till imperial Babylon bowed her head to the yoke of Cyrus. If this conjecture be well founded, it discovers the reason why the sacred writers, in describing the victorious march of the Assyrian armies, allude so frequently to the expanded eagle. Referring to the Babylonian monarch, the prophet Hosea, viii. 1, proclaimed in the ears of all Israel, the measure of whose iniquities was nearly full—‘ He shall come as an eagle against the house of the Lord.’ Jeremiah, xlviii. 40, predicted a similar calamity; ‘ Thus saith the Lord, Behold he shall fly as an eagle, and spread his wings over Moab:’ and the same figure was employed to denote the sudden destruction that overtook the house of Esau. ‘ Behold, he shall come up and fly as the eagle, and spread his wings over Bozrah.’ The words of these prophets received a full accomplishment in the irresistible impetuosity and complete success with which the Babylonian monarchs, and particularly Nebuchadnezzar, pursued their plans of conquest. Ezekiel denominates him, with great propriety, ‘ a great eagle with great wings;’ because he was the most powerful monarch of his time, and led into the field more numerous and better appointed armies (which the prophet calls, by a beautiful

figure, 'his wings,' the *wings of his army*) than perhaps the world had ever seen. The prophet Isaiah, referring to the same monarch, predicted the subjugation of Judea in these terms—'He shall pass through Judah. He shall overflow, and go over. He shall reach even to the neck. And the stretching out of his wings, (the array of his army) shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.' Isai. viii. 8. The king of Egypt is also styled by Ezekiel, 'a great eagle, with great wings, and many feathers;' but he manifestly gives the preference to the king of Babylon, by adding, that he had 'long wings, full of feathers, which had divers colours;' that is, greater wealth and a more numerous army."

Two or three other extracts are reserved for the next Number.

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Letters from the Rev. R. Wright, to the Unitarians in the North-east District.

LETTER III.

Trowbridge, June 7, 1826.

MY CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

HAVING in my second letter urged upon you the necessity of a diligent and persevering attention to personal religion, vital and practical piety, and the constant looking to yourselves, in order to the prosperity of your churches, and your promoting the great cause of pure and primitive Christianity in the district where you reside; allow me next to address those among you whom God, in his providence, hath placed at the head of families; and to shew how much the edification of your churches, and the prosperity of the cause, depend on your steady and active performance of all the social and relative duties of life.

Christian families should be nurseries for Christian churches, which, when properly organized upon the pure and free and liberal principles of the gospel, and when influenced by the spirit of Christ, and guided in their proceedings by his precepts and example, will be like families on a larger scale; but in order to families becoming such, they must be properly instructed, habituated to devotional exercises, trained to the cheerful performance of their several domestic duties, and accustomed to attend with seriousness on the public services of the congregation. Indeed, on these things the happiness of families, and the moral

and religious improvement of the individuals who form them, especially of children and servants, will be found essentially to depend.

A family which receives no moral or religious instruction during the six days, which sees nothing of religion or devotion but in a place of public worship, the younger branches of which are not at all informed of the great objects for which they are taken to the public services, or why they are taken to one place in preference to another, but are hurried thither without any sort of preparation, are likely neither to receive the instruction and improvement, nor to feel the interest in the solemnities of the house of God, which previous instruction and preparation would be calculated to secure to them. On the other hand, a family which is favoured with the means of daily information on religious subjects, which is accustomed to join in devotional exercises in the domestic circle, and to connect Christian principles and motives with the various social and relative duties, and the several branches of which go to public worship with proper views of the important ends it is designed to answer, and prepared to unite in it with the understanding and the heart, will be likely not only to be made better by it, but to feel increasing interest and zeal in the cause of true religion, to become pillars in the house of God, and to be active in promoting the cause of divine truth and evangelical righteousness. On those who are placed at the head of families and have the government of them, it depends whether their families shall be prepared, by proper instruction and discipline, to increase and strengthen the churches to which they belong, and to assist and promote the great cause which they espouse. However ardently they may wish this should be the case, how can they expect it any further than they use proper means for the instruction of those who are under their care, and to lead them in what they believe to be the right way? If your children, as they grow to maturity, desert the places of worship where you attend, adopt different views from those you believe to be consistent with the gospel, or become luke-warm and indifferent in their Christian profession, is there not reason to fear that you have neglected your duty towards them, that you have not used proper means to inform and interest them in religious matters, and to excite in them real piety and Christian zeal? Surely this requires deep self-examination. Let

me intreat you to consider whether this be not one cause of the decay of some of your churches, and of the low state of the cause among you in some places.

Think how important are your duties, how great your responsibility, and of the solemn account you must hereafter give of the manuer in which you have acquitted yourselves in the important trust committed to you. That your families may be nurseries for the churches to which you belong, I beg your attention to the following word of exhortation :

1. Make it your study so to conduct yourselves, and to act towards all those who are under your care, that they may receive a favourable impression of the doctrines which you believe, and of the religious services in which you join, by perceiving the good influence these things have upon you. This will dispose them to give the more attention to your instruction, and will help to incline them to attend on the same public services. The constant opportunity they have of observing your spirit and behaviour, and what they feel from it, will be sure to make either a favourable or unfavourable impression respecting your religious profession, and sometimes will have more influence than any arguments or reasonings you can employ.

2. Remember your example will have a great influence upon your families, and especially the younger branches of them. If they see you constant and diligent in attending upon public worship, always careful to be at the place when it commences, and closely attentive, punctual in the observance of the social and domestic duties of religion, and serious and devout in conversation on the Scriptures, this will be likely to have a happy effect upon them ; but if they see you careless and indifferent in these things, or perceive in you a want of seriousness and piety, the effects may be most painful. Let it be your study, for their sakes, as well as your own, to shew yourselves every thing you would wish them to be.

3. The instructing of those whom God, in his providence, hath placed under your care, especially your children, is a most important duty, and if faithfully done will be followed with the Divine blessing. It was stated as the reason why God would bestow such peculiar blessings on Abraham, that he would command his children and his household after him, and they should keep the way of the Lord. Gen. xviii. 19. Religious truth is of inestimable value, the

Knowledge of it is the foundation of both virtue and happiness. This knowledge you should communicate to your children as soon as they are capable of receiving it. This may be done by directing their attention to such parts of scripture as are suited to their age, by verbal instruction, and by giving them such things to read as are on a level with their capacity. If you do not place before them right views of God and truth, they will be likely to adopt popular ones, however erroneous they may be. As you wish to see them grow up with right views and principles in religion, do all you can to lead them to such views and principles in their early years.

4. The neglect of family worship is a great evil, and there is reason to fear it is not uncommon among many professors of the gospel. Where this prevails, there will be ground to dread a decay of real piety and Christian zeal, and a decline of genuine Christianity. I beseech you, my brethren, let not this evil exist among you. Without going into a statement of the duty and privilege and advantages of family worship, let me intreat you to consider how important it is to cultivate and cherish in your families a spirit of piety and devotional feelings, to teach them to set God always before them, and to have a regard to him in all their ways, and that family worship is eminently calculated, when properly conducted, to answer this important purpose. Is it likely that the neglect of public worship would be so common, if a devotional spirit were cultivated in private, and if feelings and habits of devotion were daily cherished in the domestic circle? Or would persons talk merely of going to *hear* a sermon, overlooking the more important, the devotional, part of the service? Never forget that, next to the cherishing of vital piety, as individuals, the keeping up of family worship and teaching all under your care to serve the one and only God, that your households may belong to your churches, is necessary to the revival and prosperity of the cause among you.

5. If you would wish your descendants to follow in your steps, and to promote the same great cause which you are anxious to promote, you ought to habituate them to attend on public worship with you from their very infancy, and to instruct them in the nature and design of it, that, as they grow up, they may regularly attend, not merely from habit, but from a conviction of its value and importance, and may feel a delight in the service of God. You ought to teach

them why you attend on Dissenting worship, and on that of Unitarians among Dissenters, in preference to all other; that, perceiving the good grounds you have for your conduct, they may not be drawn away by what is more fashionable and agreeable to the spirit of the world. If all of you who have families do what you can to bring the whole of your families into the congregations to which you belong, and to inspire them with zeal and lead them to exert themselves in the Unitarian cause, this will do much towards producing a revival among you.

Fervently praying that God may bless you and your families, and crown with success all your efforts to promote his cause, I remain, most faithfully and affectionately,
yours, &c. R. WRIGHT.

Lines to the Memory of an Infant.

SIR,

Epping, May 15, 1826.

EVEN amid what are termed the "dull repositories of the dead," something enlivening is to be found. Passing a few days since through a Churchyard in Essex, the following lines, engraved on a tomb-stone erected by a kind and exemplary parent to the memory of an infant, struck me as being so exceedingly beautiful, that I could not forbear sending them to you for insertion in your valuable Reformer.

J. C.

Oh! sweet, my baby, liest thou here,
So cold, so low, and so forsaken;
And cannot a sad mother's tear,
Thy once too lovely smiles awaken?
Ah, no! within this silent tomb
Thy parents' hopes receive their doom.

Oh! sweet, my baby, round thy brow
The rose and yew are twined together;
The rose was blooming—so wast thou
Too blooming far for death to gather;
The yew was green, and green to me
For ever lives thy memory.

Oh! sweet, my baby, is thine head
Upon a rocky pillow lying?
And is the dreary grave thy bed—
Thy lullaby a mother's sighing?

Oh! changed the hour since thou didst rest
Upon a mother's faithful breast.

Oh! can I e'er forget the kiss
I gave thee on that morn of mourning?
That last, sad, tender, parting bliss,
From innocence to God returning!
Mayest thou repay that kiss to me
In realms of bright eternity!

*The Conclusion of a Sermon preached in the Meeting-house,
Wolverhampton Street, Dudley, May 7, 1826, in aid of
a Subscription for relieving the Unexampled Distress of
the Labouring Classes in Lancashire and Cheshire. By
James Hews Bransby.*

Romans xiii. 9: "And if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

* * * * *

CONTINUE, then, my friends, to regard yourselves as ministers and instruments, as stewards and almoners, of the God of love. Scatter blessings around you, even where you can expect to reap no advantage,—where you can look for no reward in this world, but the sweet and holy satisfactions of your own generous hearts. Rest not contented with indolent desires and inactive wishes. Seize every opportunity of doing good; and never be weary of the work. No business can be more honourable: in a nobler or more interesting service you cannot engage.

And here it becomes my painful duty to point your thoughts to the immediate occasion on which we are met together, and to lay before you a few particulars of the sad condition of the poor in the manufacturing districts of Lancashire and Cheshire. Their calamities, so unlooked-for and so overwhelming, are, I believe, without a parallel in the memory of the oldest among us. I shall not at present stay to inquire into the primary origin of these calamities: for when the fainting voice of misery is heard, the jarrings of politicians should for a while be still. At such a moment, instead of balancing abstract arguments, or entering into an elaborate discussion of questions on which the opinions of men are divided, we should open our hearts to the influences of compassion, and stretch forth a merciful hand to succour, to bind up, and to save. There are few of you, I presume, who are not familiar with the accounts

which have lately appeared in our public journals. They concur in the most affecting statements of the wretchedness that prevails, and place beyond the slightest doubt the melancholy fact, that thousands are in want of the common necessities of life, and that their children are famishing before their eyes. One report informs us that the people are emaciated, that with some the natural love of life itself has been subdued, and that others have been excited by the cravings of hunger to plunder for provisions. The old and the young, the vigorous and the infirm, are alike drooping under the burden of their sorrows. In a town* containing between twenty and thirty thousand inhabitants, it is said the distress is so great that "upwards of one-third of the population have nothing to do, and the unemployed live entirely upon soup, which consists of three-fourths barley and one-fourth rice, sweetened with treacle and seasoned with spices, and which costs rather less than one penny per quart." An eye-witness has declared, in the most solemn manner, his conscientious conviction, that, "without some friendly and decisive interference, devastation, bloodshed, and ruin will speedily be extended from one side of the kingdom to the other." The poor weavers have been obliged to give up their houses; and are now without a home. They have no cheerful table around which to gather with their little ones:—they have no pillow on which to rest their weary heads and forget their cares:—so hopeless is their situation that, unless extraordinary and prompt efforts are made in their behalf, they will perish in the streets. If you turn away from their cries, or even if you pause and deliberate, their doom will be sealed,—they will be beyond the reach of your compassion:—

"For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees, the envied kiss to share." †

How exquisitely pathetic is the remark of the King of Israel, as recorded in the Jewish Scriptures:‡ "While I was busy here and there, he was gone,"—the person whom I should have counselled, encouraged, and blessed!

But I check myself.—It has hitherto pleased God to shelter our own neighbourhood from the fury of the storm;

* Macclesfield.

† Gray.

‡ 1 Kings xx. 40.

and, my brethren, I will no longer harrow up your feelings by dwelling upon distresses, at the bare recital of which the ear tingles and the heart grows sick, and which it is my most fervent supplication at the throne of mercy, that you may not be destined to undergo.

We are surrounded by a population that is seldom chargeable with atrocious offences against the peace and the dearest interests of society; and, alarming as is the aspect of the times, in no part of the kingdom—I affirm it without fear of contradiction—are the labouring classes more honourably distinguished by a quiet and respectful demeanour. What ought to be our gratitude, that the outerles of human violence have been kept afar from us! In the district to which our thoughts are this afternoon directed, it has been otherwise. There the frantic multitude have busied themselves in the work of destruction, and the streets have resounded with “the noise of the footmen and the noise of the horsemen.” The unhappy sufferers have forgotten, in their delirium, that by violating the law they add sin to sorrow, and can only deepen the gloom that encompasses them, and enhance their misery. While we employ every means that we can command, to restrain their criminal excesses—while we labour to make them sensible of their infatuation—while we endeavour to shew them that there is no reason for distrusting the goodness of God, and giving themselves up to despair,—let us bear it in mind, that where coercion is in vain, and the terrors of the sword produce little or no effect, the weapons that are furnished from the armoury of Christian kindness may prove irresistible. If these deluded men can but once attain the conviction, that we are not indifferent to their welfare, that we are indeed their friends, that we cherish in our breasts a sincere, undissembled commiseration for them and for their children, they may not be able to withstand its power. It may touch and soften them;—it may, by the blessing of the Almighty, be successful in awakening their gratitude, in delivering them from their errors, and in bringing them back to the straight and peaceful path which they have forsaken.

After all that you have heard, I canneatly exhort you to come forward in support of your poorer brethren, who, but for your timely assistance, must languish and expire in the horrors of famine and disease. I call upon you who know not what hunger is, who “have bread enough and to spare,” to sympathize with your fellow-men who feed only on

wretchedness, and are compelled to drain the cup of woe. I confidently call on every one whose bosom is alive to the feelings of humanity, to contribute "of his abundance," or even from the limited resources of his poverty, to the relief of those who, except for your disinterested and generous help, can see no mitigation and no end of their sufferings, but in the appalling prospect of a most miserable and frightful death. I address myself equally to the indigent and the wealthy; and I beseech you, by all that is good and great and heavenly, to mingle your tears of pity, to offer a joint oblation upon the altar of piety and love, and to convert, if possible, the moan of complaint into the song of thankfulness and joy! I cannot conceive a question more strongly put, or more tenderly enforced, than that of the apostle, "If thou seest thy brother have need, and shuttest up thy bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in thee?"*

Nor let any one be deterred from exertion in so pious a work, by the idea that what can be done by this assembly for the relief of the sufferers, will be trifling and useless. Our blessed Saviour assures us, that the widow's mite was estimable in the eye of a heart-searching God, on account of the kind disposition with which it was bestowed. I trust also that from springs, separately considered, scanty and insignificant, will be formed a reservoir of charity, in some degree commensurate with the exigencies of the distressed. I rejoice to observe that the cause for which I am pleading, is patronized by the Sovereign with a munificence that will be remembered when the meteor glories of this transitory state shall have vanished away, and that it is most liberally supported by persons of all political parties and of all religious denominations.

It is when I behold in my countrymen such exercises of their high and philanthropic spirit,—it is when I witness the extent and perseverance of their labours for the improvement and happiness of their fellow-creatures,—it is when I reflect on their institutions for diffusing the most important knowledge among the humbler classes of the community, on their zeal in assuaging the horrors of persecution, in holding forth the word of saving truth to every nation and to every clime under the canopy of heaven,—it is when I see this energy of benevolence on whichever side

* 1 John iii. 17.

I look, that I "thank God and take courage:" it is then that "with all her faults," I am proud of the land in which we live. Well might the enlightened individual* who had spent the greater part of his life in visiting distant countries—countries where freedom and independence are names that have never been pronounced—well might he apostrophize his native shores, as the blessed asylum of all that is worth possessing upon earth. Well might he hail the island in which he drew his first breath, as the sanctuary of religion and of liberty for the whole habitable globe. Well might he exclaim, "O England! the dwelling-place of filial piety and parental love and conjugal bliss,—the cradle of genius, the temple of charity, the school of sages, the refuge of the oppressed,

'Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,
My heart, untravell'd, fondly turns to thee!'"

Shew then, my friends, at this time, by the overflowings of tenderness and mercy, that you are Britons;—shew that you are Christians;—shew that you are men. And may your prayers and your alms come up as a memorial before God!

—◆—
Church of England and Churches of America.

It is amusing in one sense, but disgusting in another, to see the professions made by candidates at the present Election of attachment to the Established Church. These are thrown out to conciliate the clergy, and to prevent the mob from charging these candidates with good-will to the Roman Catholics. If necessary, the same gentlemen would profess hatred of the meeting-house, or would abjure any doctrine or system which popular dislike should prescribe.

There is no subject upon which our public men are generally so sensitive as the Church. This is owing partly to the remains of the old prejudice that it is requisite that a man should stand well with the Church in order to be safe at last, partly to the strength of the ecclesiastical body, who are able to run down, or at least to cry down, any obnoxious statesman or candidate for parliament, and partly and principally to the interest that so large a proportion of our aristocracy and gentry and upper merchants and tradesmen have in church property as a provision for some member or members of their families. The whole

* Dr. Clarke.

mob at Ephesus shouted "Great is Diana!" but the shrine-makers for the goddess raised the cry and kept it up.

How different are matters in the United States of America! *There* the Church never dictates to the State: no religious, or rather irreligious watch-word embroils political feelings: every man's own church is the only established church. *There* religion exists without tithes, and sects abound without persecution or confusion. *There* churches are like schools, different lessons are taught in them, and the scholars have different methods of repeating the same lesson, but the end of all is one and the same, viz. useful instruction.

The contrast between England and the United States of America, was forcibly impressed upon us the other day, on seeing a letter from the latter country, in which the writer says that the *Unitarian Church at Washington* is well supported—that the *PRESIDENT* of the United States is a constant attendant, having a pew lined with scarlet velvet, and *his name upon it*—that the *Secretary of War* has also a pew and regularly attends—and that the minister of the Unitarian Church; Mr. *Little*, an Englishman, well known to some of our readers, holds an office which does not interfere with his church duties, and is treated by the President with marked attention and great kindness. After reading this, we could not help imagining the hubbub that would be raised throughout the kingdom, and the cry of danger to the Constitution that would resound through every city, town and village, if his Majesty and my Lord Liverpool were seen every Sunday at Essex-Street Chapel, and the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen at Finsbury Chapel, and Mr. Fox were made the King's private secretary!

Could men really live were this to take place?

Even so—(startle not, good reader!) for we see by the experience of America, that the President can well and truly instruct the American ministers how to treat with Mr. Canning, and can send a satisfactory message to Congress, though he joins in Mr. Little's prayers to the Father only; and that the war-minister can do his duty in keeping up the requisite military establishment on the Indian frontier, and in providing for the defence of the country in any future war, though he hears that gentleman's weekly discourses, in which Christianity is represented as a reasonable doctrine, and good morals are enforced as an essential part of true religion.

Midland Catholic Association.

In the month of April, the Annual Meeting of this Association was held at Birmingham, EDWARD BLOUNT, Esq., in the Chair. Some interesting resolutions were passed, and amongst the rest the following, unanimously :

“ The Members of the Midland Roman Catholic Association hereby declare, that, in their opinion, it is the inalienable right of every British subject to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience, without being subjected, on that account, to any civil pains, penalties, or disabilities whatsoever. That it is notorious that various laws are now in force which impose upon large classes of British subjects many such pains, penalties and disabilities, solely on account of their conscientious adherence to opinions purely religious. The Midland Catholic Association considers it not less expedient with reference to the general interests of the United Kingdom, than strictly just with regard to the constitutional rights of the above-mentioned numerous classes of British subjects, that all such laws should be repealed. That as these laws are in principle equally unjust with reference to all who differ in religious belief from the Established Church, although in their operation they bear more severely upon Roman Catholics than upon Dissenters, the Association considers it the duty of all who suffer under them to unite their exertions to obtain their total and unqualified repeal, being convinced that the united exertion and cordial co-operation of all such sufferers will be much more likely to procure them redress than the unconnected efforts of the different bodies of Roman Catholics and Dissenters. The Association, therefore, thus publicly expresses its anxious wish to join the Dissenters of this town and neighbourhood in common exertions to obtain the full enjoyment of their constitutional rights. For this purpose, it ventures to propose the formation of a Society in the Midland Counties, which shall have for its sole object, without reference to any political question, or to any religious opinion, the obtaining the unconditional repeal of every law which imposes any religious test, oath, or declaration, other than a simple oath of civil allegiance to the Government of the country, as a qualification for holding office. The Association, therefore, invites Dissenters of every denomination, Catholics, and those most numerous, liberal and respectable Protestants of the Established Church, who wish to support the rights of every class of their fellow-subjects, and to wipe off the foul blot of religious intolerance which now attaches to their country, to come forward and form such a society. And the Committee of the Midland Catholic Association are hereby requested to take all such steps which they may deem advisable for promoting the formation of the Society above mentioned.”

Another resolution, with the introductory speech and the speech that followed, we quote from a provincial periodical, *The Truth-Teller*, as singular proofs of the liberality and growing wisdom of the times.

“ Rev. T. M. M'DONNELL moved the 8th Resolution, which was one of thanks to that respectable and intelligent class of men, the Mechanics of Birmingham, who had come forward just as the Catholics

wished—to *examine* and *discuss* their question, and then pronounce their opinion. Mr. M'D. gave an interesting account of the Meeting, and stated the fact, that, of an assemblage of between 4 and 500 individuals, composed of the mechanics and others from the middling and industrious classes of the inhabitants, but 13 were found to hold up their hands against the resolutions. This, he said, was an important fact, and shewed the progress which liberal and enlightened principles were making among this description of persons. But one generation since, and in this very town, an illustrious philosopher, Dr. Priestley, was driven into exile—his house demolished, and his library committed to the flames—while the fires around proclaimed but too faithfully the flames which the torch of Bigotry had lit up in the hearts of the populace. It was, however, a cheering and important fact, that but little more than thirty years had passed away, and the populace of the same town have met and passed resolutions more liberal in their spirit, more general and comprehensive in their extent, than have yet been adopted by the Legislature of the country.

“Mr. CANNING seconded the resolution, and it was carried unanimously. On which

“Mr. JAMES MARDEN rose and said,—‘There are situations, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, in which a person may find himself placed, when he cannot remain silent. In such a situation I feel myself at the present moment. The very handsome notice you have taken of our humble efforts in the cause of Religious Freedom last year, calls on me, in behalf of my coadjutors as well as myself, to return you our warmest and most respectful acknowledgments. When I entered this room I had not the most distant idea of intruding myself on your attention, and on this account, should my heart outstrip my head, I must rely on your indulgence. The good opinion and thanks of those whom we respect and esteem, cannot but be gratifying to every well-disposed mind; but when, as in the present instance, we witness those whose talents and exertions command our admiration, advocating the same glorious principles as ourselves, the gratification is indeed a cheering one. It is at all times to me a source of delightful feeling to hear from *Catholic* lips sentences glowing with liberality and freedom. I have always been favourable to Catholic Emancipation, because I consider it the cause of justice; but it is only recently that I have been convinced that an attachment to Catholicism did not naturally dispose the mind to have a leaning towards arbitrary power. In this respect, I thank God, I have outlived my prejudices; but there are many conscientious Protestants who are warm friends to freedom generally, yet on principle are opposed to us on this subject. We peruse our Neals, our Bennetts, and our Burnets, and from them we learn to detest persecution and arbitrary power; but it is not unfrequent that we imbibe likewise a misrepresentation of Catholics, and a belief that Catholicism and tyranny are very intimately acquainted. But, Gentlemen, these prejudices and obstacles are fast dying away. The times are propitious, and the mental atmosphere of our country is becoming more and more free from the mists and vapours which once obscured it. Although your cause be not supported in the way which it deserves—though there may be those (of whom you might have hoped better things) that do not co-operate with you—and although success has not yet crowned your exertions, yet be not discouraged; flag not in your noble and arduous conflict with the

bigotry and prejudices of the age. If ye cannot do all ye *wish*, do all ye *can*; remember that no good effort is ever finally *lost*, and that that body of men, who, in struggling for their *rights*, are easily discouraged and disheartened, neither deserve nor are likely to obtain success."

OBITUARY.

1826. May 7, in the 69th year of his age, WILLIAM COWLEY, of *Totnes, Devon*, a steady and resolute supporter of those doctrines which he regarded as the main pillars of Christian truth, the Unity of God and the Humanity of Jesus, the Christ, His servant and messenger.

Punctual in his attendance at the house of God, and ever ready to defend the system of religion he professed, he habitually and fearlessly expressed his disapprobation of the conduct of those who desert the standard of truth, or hesitate to support the doctrines they really believe, from "a fear of what man can do unto them," or from "a hope of worldly emolument." And it is to be lamented that so many and so frequent occasions arose to call forth this disapprobation. He justly considered it to be the duty of every professing Christian to search for the truth in the pages of holy writ, and, when found, to profess it at all hazards. The respect due to his superiors in virtue and knowledge, he cheerfully paid; but he considered the possession of wealth *alone*, to be a mistaken ground of superiority; and, though by no means in affluent circumstances, he steadily refused to sacrifice his independence, as he saw others around him doing, by servility or flattery, or any other mean compliances.

In politics he was a Radical Reformer, and though this character was sometimes given to *him*, as it is given to *others*, by way of reproach or derision, it was a character he rejoiced to bear, and which he even gloried in. In religion he was a Unitarian-Christian; and knowing that He who created the mind, created it free, he always spoke as he thought, and delivered his opinion with becoming freedom, though not with impertinent interference. This independent and fearless way of expressing his sentiments, often brought upon him unmerited abuse from those whose opinions were different from his own; but he never swerved from what he considered to be the truth, and persevered in declaring and defending the doctrines which he believed, "through evil report and good report." His duties of private and social life he conscientiously discharged; and he was, I believe, a truly honest man. This of itself is no mean praise, if the axiom of the poet be true,

"An honest man's the noblest work of God."

He met with an accident from a fall a few days before his death, and received several severe contusions in his arm and

side, which, from a neglect of the remedies usually applied in such cases, terminated fatally. I saw him but a short time previous to his decease, when he was perfectly sensible, and recognized all his friends. At that time he breathed with great difficulty, but he was quite resigned to his fate, and tranquillity had evidently taken possession of his mind. He seemed to be peacefully enjoying the pleasures so beautifully described in the hymn,

" While some in folly's pleasures roll,
And seek the joys which hurt the soul,
Be mine that silent, calm repast,
A peaceful conscience to the last.

With this companion in the shade
My soul shall be no more dismayed,
But fearless meet the midnight gloom,
And the pale monarch of the tomb!"

From six o'clock in the evening till half-past nine, when he breathed his last, he appeared to be in an easy and composed sleep; not a muscle was agitated, and he expired without a sigh or a groan. Indeed, so perfectly easy and gentle was his passage to eternity, that those who were attending him were not aware that the "silver chain was loosed" till some moments after his decease.

I have been thus particular in describing the events which immediately preceded his death, because it is sometimes said that "*a Unitarian cannot die in peace.*" If those who make this rash and unfounded assertion (and there are many who do mistakingly avow this to be the case, but if such persons) could have been present when William Cowley breathed his last, I trust they would not only have banished the erroneous conviction from their hearts, but would even have had pious and virtuous feeling sufficient to tempt them to exclaim, "O may I too die the death of the righteous, and may my last end be like his!"

My deceased friend was borne to the grave on the morning of Wednesday following, by eight members of the congregation to which he belonged, at the hour of eleven, the curate of the parish having refused to comply with the wishes of his surviving family to attend at an earlier hour. He is now

"Where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

Thus lived and thus died William Cowley, upwards of thirty years one of the trustees of the Unitarian Chapel, Totnes, in the county of Devon.

ROBERT LAMPEN.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Communications have been received from Mr. Worsley; N.; &c.

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JULY, 1826.

[Vol. XII.]

Essay on the History and Character of David.

DAVID was the youngest son of Jesse, an inhabitant of Bethlehem, whose sheep he tended; having the entire care of them, while his brethren were serving in Saul's forces against the Philistines. He possessed great personal beauty, agility and strength; and his pastoral life, in a country comparatively wild and uncultivated, gave scope for the exercise of his active and courageous habits. To these accomplishments he added skill in the instrumental music of the times; and such qualifications recommended him afterwards to Saul, of whom he was made the armour-bearer. Thus much we know of his youth, previously to his being introduced into public life.

God having determined that the descendants of Saul should not fill the kingly office, Samuel went to the house of Jesse and anointed David, in token of his being destined to occupy the throne, whenever it became vacant. Men who are conscious of being marked out for a post of great dignity and power, and of being endowed with the talents requisite for obtaining and preserving it, usually burn with a desire of placing themselves as soon as possible in so elevated a station. David, however, was remarkably free from this fever of ambition; and we cannot but admire the singular modesty of his deportment in circumstances which commonly puff up inexperienced youth with vanity and pride: how unassuming were his language and behaviour in every part of his successful combat with Goliath! How modest was he, when honoured with the applauses of the Israelitish army, and with substantial tokens of his sovereign's approbation! Nothing equals his humility, except his collected fortitude: though confident of victory, he derives his confidence from faith in God, rather than from reliance on the skill and bravery which his manner of life had cherished. A stripling, a shepherd-boy, he conquered, with his single arm, the champion, from whom the boldest warriors of Israel had retired in dismay: and he conquered him with the simple implements of a sling and a stone. The fight was remarkable, not merely for the combatants, but for its conse-

quences. Present safety was ensured to the Israelites, and further stability to the throne; while David was taken into the family of Saul, with whose son Jonathan he soon contracted the friendship of a congenial mind.

The caprice, nevertheless, of the reigning monarch, his envious jealousy and tyrannical disposition, quickly made it requisite for David to escape from the palace, to wander in the most uncultivated parts of the country, and even to seek refuge in the territories of the Philistines. Saul's conduct towards him, in this period of his history, was uncommonly treacherous and cruel; and the fugitive was repeatedly placed in situations which tried the strength of his moral and religious principles. In these circumstances, he behaved with a forbearance and generosity of which there are not many examples, and twice spared the life of his relentless persecutor, when he had him in his power.

On the death of Saul and of Jonathan, he ascended the throne, not, however, without a harassing opposition from the family and adherents of the deceased sovereign. Here again, as well as in the provision which he made for one of Jonathan's descendants, we see him giving proof of great moderation and goodness of spirit. It was evidently his aim to avoid the use of violence: he did not procure or maintain his sceptre by spilling innocent blood; and, though, for a large portion of his reign, he was engaged in wars with the surrounding nations, he was not eager to take up the sword, or unwilling to return it to its scabbard.

I shall not pass over his conduct towards Bathsheba and Uriah: this was a combination of two most aggravated offences, which no individual, except an Eastern monarch, could well have the power of committing. Nathan, by a most apposite and touching parable, roused David's conscience from its slumbers, and filled him with remorse and penitence: the appeal was, in every view, honourable to the prophet, whose courage and fidelity were fully equalled by the skill and eloquence of his reproof; and it was, at the same time, honourable to the king, who listened with an obedient ear to this wise reprover. Sacred History, uniformly impartial, has recorded the guilt of David, and his contrition: it has related, too, his heavy punishment. Disunion and wickedness prevailed among his children: a favourite son excited and headed a rebellion against him; driving the unhappy prince from his palace, but finally losing his own life in this unnatural attempt to gain pos-

session of the crown. By these events David was deeply humbled and afflicted; yet his spirit and his language were those of perfect resignation; and never perhaps did his character shine forth with so bright a lustre.

Even his declining age was scarcely permitted to enjoy repose: his dying pillow was disturbed by the murmurs of sedition and the shouts of treason. He had destined Solomon to succeed him in the government; and, apprehending the evils of a disputed succession, had caused him to be anointed king during his life-time. Adonijah, however, another of his sons, became a competitor for the sceptre; gaining over to his interest some of the chief persons in the realm. Happily the revolt was soon quelled, and Solomon, to whom the expiring monarch confided the execution of some important designs, which he himself was not permitted to accomplish, reigned over all Israel.

If we survey David as a man, we shall perceive that, with considerable talents for active life and public business, he united dispositions which, in the main, were just, benevolent and pious, and a strength of moral and religious principle which had an almost uniform ascendancy over his deportment. No slight evidence of his devotional taste is furnished by the number of the compositions, still extant, in which he breathes the very soul of pious reverence, gratitude, resignation, trust, desire, hope, and joy; these he framed in different spots and circumstances; and, for variety, grandeur, elegance and impressiveness, they maintain, and will always maintain, a high place in the regard of every sincere and fervent worshiper of the true God. Nor would it be difficult to produce examples of the compassion to a prostrate foe, of the long-suffering amidst unprovoked injuries, and of the wise regulation of the passions, which David manifested.

As a sovereign, he would have been happier if the course of his reign had been less marked by turbulence; and more respectable, had circumstances enabled him to cultivate, like Solomon, the arts of peace. But, if the characters of princes are to be read in the condition and affections of their subjects, what should restrain us from bestowing on David's memory the praise of a beneficent and righteous king? With the exception of those whom treason drew over to the standard of Absalom, the hearts of the people were knit to David: he found the nation disunited, and he left it in a state of concord; he found it weak, depressed, and in danger of being totally overrun by

its enemies; and he left it strong, triumphant and secure, enjoying, without molestation, the regular administration of justice and exercise of religion.

The feelings of David were at once powerful and tender, and his kindness as a father could not be surpassed; though candour and impartiality require us to admit that it might have been more enlightened. He indulged Adonijah; he indulged Absalom; and each of them resisted his authority and wishes, and traitorously aspired to his throne. But whose heart, if not that of a parent, in nearly the same circumstances with his, can conceive of his agony on hearing of the death of Absalom? The shouts of victory are drowned in the loud exclamations of grief which refuses to be comforted; the triumphant warrior is forgotten in the deeply afflicted father.

It cannot, I think, be reasonably denied, that David was a prophet. The harp of this sweet singer of Israel occasionally vibrates to a more than mortal touch; its notes rise in majesty as they utter the sound of those glad tidings of great joy, which had the ministry and the gospel of Jesus Christ for their subject. "All things," says our Lord, "must be accomplished, which are written in the PSALMS concerning me." On reading this declaration, can we harbour a doubt whether *the Psalms* contain predictions of the Messiah? Not that, like some professors of Christianity, we can discover him in nearly every verse of them: this is the other and a very injurious extreme. Still the son of Jesse has not been totally silent concerning the founder and the glories of the Christian dispensation. "David, in spirit," under the special impulse of the Deity, "calls" our Saviour "Lord." The highly poetical genius which elevates and delights us by its descriptions of the wonders of creation, which melts our hearts by its elegiac strains over Saul and Jonathan, and which engages our sympathy with its possessor, when he is forced into dens and caves of the earth, and when he bewails his absence from the sanctuary of his God, this same lofty genius sometimes delineates evangelic scenes, and speaks in hallowed accents of far the most illustrious of the posterity of David.

In the judgment both of Jews and Christians, David was, on several accounts, one of the most memorable persons whom the world has, at any time, seen. But some of the friends of revelation, not less than many of its enemies, have been unjust in their estimate of him. I am

neither his blind admirer nor indiscriminately his accuser. History brings us acquainted with only a single human being who was perfect. David incurred the guilt of some heinous crimes: yet of these he was self-convicted; and the bold transgressor soon became the lowly penitent. Nor should it be forgotten, that he lived in an age far less favoured than ours is with religious advantages. Our verdict respecting him should be formed on a consideration of the whole of his behaviour compared with his situation; and if we view his character with impartiality, he will neither be entirely acquitted nor absolutely condemned.

Most readers of the Bible infer, from the circumstance of David's being called "the man after God's own heart," that his conduct was in every respect approved by God. But the phrase has a different meaning, and denotes simply that David was selected, by the Deity, to be king of Israel, in the room of Saul. In this language there is no reference to the moral character of the son of Jesse. General expressions are limited by the occasions and the subjects of them; while, on the other hand, uncandid writers have availed themselves of popular misinterpretations of Scripture for the purpose of arraigning the truth of revealed religion.

N.

Tables of Toleration.

[By a Correspondent: from *Remarks on the Consumption of Public Wealth by the Clergy of every Christian Nation.* P. 76; 4th ed.]

The Intolerant Nations,

Where men are excluded from all or part of the civil or military offices of the state, unless they be of a particular sect.

Spain. No man can fill any office, civil or military, unless he be a *Roman Catholic*.

Portugal. The same.

Italy. The same (except in the Austrian part).

Denmark. No man can fill any office, civil or military, unless he be a *Lutheran*.

Sweden and Norway. The same.

It is to be lamented that such intolerant laws should exist; but it must be observed that the intolerance of the above nations is not oppressive to any of their subjects, as in each nation the people are all to a man members of the Established Religion.

England. No man enjoys all the rights and privileges of a citizen in England and Ireland unless he be of the Church of England. More than two-thirds of the people are suffering under this intolerance, being members of other sects. The Corporations and the Universities are shut against them, and the public offices of emolument nearly so. Besides these privations, in common with others, the hearers of the Roman Catholic Church, who are full one-fourth of the population, are excluded both Houses of Parliament. This is effected by means of an anathema or oath of abuse and condemnation which all the members take, by which they swear that those points of religion are heretical and damnable which are professed and venerated as sacred by 5,800,000 of the subjects of England, and by 160 millions of her allies, including two emperors and seven kings. Other intolerant nations are content with the candidate for office professing himself to be of the established religion; this gratuitous curse upon the religion of others is said to be without parallel. The intolerance of England is the greatest oppression now exhibited by Christianity. It oppresses two-thirds of the whole population with considerable severity, in order to create a monopoly of riches and of learning for the other third; and upon one fourth of the population it exercises a double portion of oppression. The practical result of the latter is, the most abject helotism, attended with perpetual insurrection and *expensive military establishments, and pregnant with future danger to the empire from the geographical position of the suffering parties.*

The Tolerant Nations,

Where no man is excluded from civil or military employments on account of his sect or religion.

United States. All men of every sect are eligible to fill all employments, civil or military.

France. ——— The same.

Russia. ——— The same.

Austria. ——— The same.

Prussia. ——— The same.

Netherlands. ——— The same.

Bavaria. ——— The same.

Wurtemberg. ——— The same.

Hanover. ——— The same.

Saxony. ——— The same.

Christians throughout the World.

	Roman Catholics.	Protestants.	Greek Church.
In Great Britain and Ireland..	5,800,000	15,200,000	
In all the rest of the world ..	118,872,000	38,856,000	41,000,000
Total....	124,672,000	54,056,000	41,000,000

<i>Catholics</i>	124,672,000	pay to their Clergy	£6,106,000
<i>Protestants</i>	54,056,000		11,906,000
<i>Greek Church</i>	41,000,000		760,000

Total of Christians.. 219,728,000 pay to their Clergy £18,772,000,
of which England, for 21 millions of people, pays more than one-half.

Expenditure on the Clergy of the people of Great Britain and Ireland, who are not hearers of the Established Church of England and Ireland.

	Number of Hearers.	Rate of Expenditure per million of Hearers.	Total of Expenditure.
England & Wales } various denominations..	6,000,000	£85,000	£513,000
Scotland.. Established Kirk.....	1,500,000	135,000	206,000
Ditto not of the Kirk.....	500,000	90,000	44,000
Ireland { not of the Established Church.....	6,600,000	40,000	261,000
Total hearers..	14,600,000	Amount	£1,024,000

D.

On Religious Instruction to Classes of Young Persons.

SIR,

Bridport, June 20, 1826.

It is delightful to observe among us the indications of an increasing zeal for the religious and moral improvement of the young and the poor. Those who have been interested in the recent communications to the Reformer on this subject will not be unwilling to peruse a few further hints from one who is engaged heart and hand in this work.

There is, in the first volume of Dr. Priestley's Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion, "An Essay on the best Method of communicating Religious Knowledge to the Members of Christian Societies," which ought to be attentively perused by all who wish for the prosperity of our churches and the amelioration of mankind. In the remarks

which I proceed to offer, it will be taken for granted that this Essay has been referred to, and that the general principles on which it proceeds are acknowledged to be just.

The class of persons for whom it is our immediate concern to provide instruction are those whom Dr. Priestley places in a middle station between children, (to whom he would teach a plain catechism,) and those who are sufficiently advanced in age and knowledge to be fitted for a course of lectures on the institutes of religion. In this middle class, he says, "I would teach the knowledge of the Scriptures only," and for this purpose recommends the use of his Scripture Catechism, which consists of questions with references to those places in the Bible where the proper answers may be found. Since the publication of Dr. Priestley's work the instructor of the young has been furnished with additional means of accomplishing the end in view. I allude to Mr. Turner's Abstract of the Bible History, which the experience of many among us can testify, is well adapted to communicate the knowledge of religious truth in the most engaging manner, to inform the learner as to the events of scripture history, and at the same time to impress the grand principles of religion on the heart. As to the benefits which may be derived from the study of this truly cheap and excellent little work, "we speak what we do know, and testify what we have seen." The writer of this letter has had opportunities of observing its utility in the instruction of a class of youths whose previous means of improvement had been very limited, some of whom were almost entirely destitute of religious ideas, and were indeed very deficient in the art of reading. The class met regularly on a Sunday evening, each member was provided with a copy of Mr. Turner's Abstract,* a portion was read either by each in succession, or by the teacher; an attempt was made to illustrate and impress the facts and principles therein contained, attention was paid to the particulars of time and place, and after a devotional exercise the class separated. At the next meeting the

* This seems essential to the success of the plan, and ought to be done, even if it were needful for this purpose to supply the books gratis. It is of essential importance that the persons under instruction should be enabled and induced to study at home the lessons delivered to them at the place of meeting. They will otherwise be found to make little progress. What they read or hear at one meeting will seldom be retained during the space of a week.

same portion of the Abstract was made the subject of examination, and it was thus ascertained how far it had been understood and retained in the mind. This being done, and such additional remarks made as appeared to be seasonable, the class proceeded to the perusal of another portion of the work, which was treated in the same manner as before. The result has been satisfactory beyond the expectation of those who were the most sanguine at the commencement of the course. It is obvious that the prosecution of this plan may be advantageously combined with a frequent reference to the Scriptures, and with the employment of Dr. Priestley's Scripture Catechism above referred to. It ought likewise to be remarked, that an occasional recapitulation of the most important facts and dates is highly advisable. The progress thus made will be slow, and the course of instruction limited, but with young persons, whose minds have not been previously cultivated and whose daily occupations afford them little leisure for reading, if more were attempted less would be accomplished.

Supposing the class to have completed the study of Mr. Turner's work, and to be disposed for further instruction, a few very low-priced, but very valuable pamphlets, might be gone through in the same way, and might be so arranged as to form something like a regular course of familiar instruction. I trust I shall not be deemed presumptuous in specifying those which appear to me best calculated to instruct and to discipline the youthful mind, and thus to prepare the learner for the profitable perusal of the controversial as well as practical publications which now abound.

1. Dr. Clarke's "Answer to the Question, Why are you a Christian?"

2. Wright's pamphlet on "The Necessity and Utility of adhering to First Principles." This invaluable little work is admirably adapted to qualify the inquirer for pursuing the work of investigation.

3. Dr. Carpenter's Unitarians' Appeal. This tract is too well known and appreciated to need a recommendation. It supplies a candid statement of the Unitarian doctrine with a mass of scripture proof in its support.

4. Priestley's Appeal to the Serious and Candid Professor of the Gospel.

5. Ditto's Familiar Illustrations of certain Passages of

Scripture. The first of these contains scriptural arguments in support of our views as to the use of reason in religion, the power of man to do the will of God, original sin, election and reprobation, the supremacy of the Father and the person of Christ, and on the doctrine of atonement. "The Familiar Illustrations" are intended to assist the unlearned in the interpretation of those passages on which Calvinists and Trinitarians mainly rely as proofs of their opinions on the subjects above enumerated. Any one who is fully acquainted with these two pamphlets, and is capable of applying in other instances the principles of reasoning which they exemplify, will read the Scriptures with great improvement, and will seldom be at a loss when called upon to give a reason for the hope that is in him, or to shew why he rejects the reputedly orthodox interpretations of the word of God.

I will mention only one other suitable work for this plan of instruction ; its title will sufficiently explain its purport and design.

6. Dr. Carpenter's *Grounds of Dissent from the Established Church*. All the books now enumerated, including Turner's *Abstract*, may be purchased for about 4s. 6d., so that, by the payment of a penny per week for twelve months, a valuable compendium of religious knowledge may be obtained. Happy would it be for us, and for the world, if every member of every Unitarian church were in possession of them, and if their substance, their principles and spirit, were fully and practically imbibed.

I will only add further, reverting to the management of a class of young persons, that the method pursued by the ladies thus meritoriously employed at Bridport,* of selecting passages from various works, which blend instruction and interest together, ought by no means to be overlooked. It is not only allowable, but useful, thus to consult the appetite for variety which is natural to man, and especially to the youthful mind. May the blessing of Heaven attend the efforts of those who are engaged in this great and holy work ; may their number be multiplied and their success be complete !

G. B. W.

* Vide *Christian Reformer* for May, pp. 190, 191.

The Treasures of the Deep.

[From "The Forest Sanctuary; and other Poems." By Mrs. HEMANS.
8vo. Murray, 1825.]

1st.

WHAT hid'st thou in thy treasure caves and cells?
Thou hollow-sounding and mysterious main!
Pale glistening pearls and rainbow-colour'd shells,
Bright things which gleam unrecked-of and in vain.
—Keep, keep thy riches, melancholy sea!
We ask not such from thee.

2nd.

Yet more, the depths have more! What wealth untold,
Far down and shining, through their stillness lies!
Thou hast the starry gems, the burning gold,
Won from ten thousand royal Argosies!
—Sweep o'er thy spoils, thou wild and wrathful main!
Earth claims not these again.

3rd.

Yet more, the depths have more! Thy waves have roll'd
Above the cities of a world gone by!
Sand hath filled up the palaces of old,
Sea-weed o'ergrown the halls of revelry.
—Dash o'er them, ocean, in thy scornful play!
Man yields them to decay.

4th.

Yet more, the billows and the depths have more!
High hearts and brave are gathered to thy breast!
They hear not now the booming waters roar,
The battle thunders will not break their rest.
—Keep thy red gold and gems, thou stormy grave!
Give back the true and brave!

5th.

Give back the lost and lovely!—those for whom
The place was kept at board and hearth so long,
The prayer went up through midnight's breathless gloom,
And the vain yearning woke 'midst festal song!
—Hold fast thy buried isles, thy towers o'erthrown;
But all is not thine own.

6th.

To thee the love of woman hath gone down;
 Dark flow thy tides o'er manhood's noble head,
 O'er youth's bright locks and beauty's flowery crown;
 Yet must thou hear a voice—Restore the dead!
 Earth shall reclaim her precious things from thee!
 Restore the dead thou sea.

*Letters from the Rev. R. Wright, to the Unitarians in
 the North-east District.*

LETTER IV.

Trowbridge, July 4, 1826.

MY CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

ONE subject on which I think it necessary to address you, relates to persons who may be friendly to you, who agree with you in the doctrine of the Divine Unity, and the natural goodness and mercifulness of God, and in approving of the moral parts of Christianity; but who do not admit the divinity of the mission and office of Jesus Christ, or the reality of the miracles recorded in the New Testament. This class of Unbelievers, while they give evidence of their integrity, and shew by their fruits that they are influenced by good principles, certainly deserve not only candid, but liberal and kind treatment. It would be extremely unjust to confound them with the scurrilous revilers of Christ and Christianity, and those who cast off all religion, and who shew by their fruits that they wish to shake off the salutary restraints of the gospel, and the obligations to a virtuous and benevolent course which it imposes. Such a description of Unbelievers as I refer to appears not to have existed in the days of Christ and the apostles, and probably never would have existed where the gospel was known and its privileges enjoyed, had not Christianity been greatly corrupted in doctrine, spirit and practice. The unbelievers we read of in the New Testament, if not hypocrites, were worldly-minded, corrupt and bad men; hence the severe language used by Jesus and his apostles respecting them; but as our Lord has given us but one rule by which we are to judge of men, i. e. as we judge of trees, by their fruit, it must be unauthorized, and a violation of that rule, to call those whose conduct is

virtuous and benevolent, bad men, though they reject what we believe to be true and highly important. He alone who searcheth the heart, and is acquainted with the secret motives and hidden springs of action, can tell how far the unbelief of such persons as I am speaking of, and their errors, are involuntary, and arise from insuperable circumstances; or how far their rejection of what we deem most true and valuable involves culpability: it belongs to him, not to us, to judge them; for us to do it would be presumptuous and wicked: and the New Testament assures us, that at the last day men will be judged and rewarded or punished, not according to what they have believed or disbelieved, but according to their works. It is wrong for you to censure and condemn, or to use uncharitable language respecting any persons, in particular if they be virtuous in their conduct. Harsh language and uncharitable treatment will do nothing towards convincing Unbelievers; but will rather tend to strengthen them in their unbelief, and to dishonour Christianity, so far as indulged in by its professors. I beseech you, my brethren, carefully to guard against this evil.

It has been a charge against Unitarians that Unbelievers attend some of their places of worship, and are mixed up with their congregations; this charge has been brought against some of you: hence I have thought it proper to consider it in these Letters, and to give you such advice as seems to me most proper in this case.

1. I consider the charge itself, though not altogether unfounded, to exaggerate the matter, and to place it in an unfair light, by supposing that Unbelievers are to be found in no Christian congregations but those of Unitarians. If it be an evil it is not the less so because it exists not exclusively among Unitarians; but when the reputed orthodox so represent it, the motive seems obvious; it is with a view to scandalize the Unitarian doctrine and its professors as favourable to Infidelity. I am far from deriving pleasure from a knowledge of the evils which exist among other denominations of Christians; but I have known Unbelievers to exist among other Christian congregations, of Dissenters and Methodists, to say nothing of the Established Church, as well as those of Unitarians; though they have been less open in expressing themselves, because the same liberty has not been admitted among the former as among the latter: consequently doubts have

been concealed, and scepticism has been more reserved, and dissimulation sometimes practised.

2. If it be granted that Unbelievers more commonly attend Unitarian than reputed Orthodox places of worship, a reason may be assigned for this which is not disreputable either to Unitarianism or its professors. Unitarianism has not produced the Unbelievers which are found in the congregations of its professors; those congregations as such are too modern in England, and its legal profession too recent, for this to have been generally the case; it is well known that most of the Unbelievers who come among us were bred in reputed Orthodoxy, and have been led by identifying the dogmas of Orthodoxy with the Scriptures to become Unbelievers: this, at least, first led them to question the truth of Christianity. Many such have been recovered by the knowledge of Unitarianism to the faith of Christ; others have said, that could they be convinced that Unitarianism is identical with the New Testament, they should be Christians. — Virtuous Unbelievers, who would otherwise be driven from all public worship and religious instruction, attend Unitarian chapels, because, though they believe not all they hear, their reason is not revolted, nor their feelings shocked; and to such places they can take their families with some degree of satisfaction: this may prevent that deterioration of character which a total neglect of public worship and religious instruction would produce, in some good degree counteract the influence of speculative unbelief, and if it do not issue in their recovery to Christian belief, may be of essential benefit to their families, who might otherwise be brought up without any religion. It certainly is no dishonour to Unitarianism that it retains some degree of the attention of virtuous Unbelievers to religious worship and Christian instruction; and if their unbelief should continue, it cannot be the fault of Unitarianism, as faith in Christ is constantly maintained as an essential part of it.

3. As, for some reason or other, Unbelievers are found among those who attend some of your places of worship, it is of importance to consider how you ought to act towards them; and, in doing this, it is proper to take into view what are likely to be their motives in attending. I am speaking of Unbelievers who are upright and virtuous, so far as can be known by the general tenor of their conduct; and recollect that Christian charity requires, that

you should believe and hope the best, in every case, that all the circumstances, candidly weighed, will allow. It is difficult to conceive that Unbelievers can be influenced by bad motives to attend on your public services, as they have no worldly honour, power, emolument, or advantages whatever to hope for from it; if influenced by sinister motives they would be likely to attend the Established Church, or among some more popular party of Dissenters, rather than among you. It is likely their early habits render it pleasant, if not necessary to their comfort, to attend at some place of public worship; and both their understanding and their hearts give the preference to Unitarian worship; or, it is possible, after all, that they have so much relish for Christianity, and their speculative notions have so little influence, that they really find enjoyment in Christian worship; or they may still see so much excellence in Christianity that they may feel interested in its promotion for the good of mankind, and may wish to keep the attention of their families engaged to it; or, which I know to be the case with some, they may think and speak of themselves as Unbelievers, merely because they cannot find demonstration where only moral evidence exists, and cannot find the same absolute certainty which they have heard some Christians express. Whichsoever of these, or whatever other motives may influence them to attend among you, it would be uncharitable and unjust to ascribe it to any bad motive, and you ought to act towards them in the spirit of your great Master, in such a manner as is calculated to impress them with the happy influence of faith in Christ upon the temper and conduct, doing all you can to remove their doubts and difficulties, and to win their attention to the evidences of truth.

4. It certainly would be improper, how much soever you may respect and esteem Unbelievers who attend on your public services and mix in your congregations, on account of their virtue and goodness, either to say or do any thing that would look like complimenting or countenancing their unbelief, as if it was the effect of superior strength of mind, or of freedom of thought, or of fearlessness of character: this would justly lead others to question your Christian sincerity, and would be highly injurious. You ought never to speak or act otherwise than as Christians, under the foolish notion that your letting your faith and hope prominently appear, even in your inter-

course with Unbelievers, would give offence. Sensible and honest Unbelievers will respect you the more for your speaking and acting in character as Christians; your allegiance to Jesus Christ absolutely requires it of you; and every Christian principle and motive should impel you thus to act. All your conversation should be with simplicity and godly sincerity. Any want of firmness and steady consistency, in the profession of your faith in Christ, and in acting as believers in him, will injure your character in the view even of Unbelievers, and tend to strengthen them in their unbelief. It is not necessary for you to be always disputing with them when in their company; but so far as circumstances require it, you should be ready to shew the steadfastness of your faith, and to give a reason of the hope which is in you. In those places where some Unbelievers attend, it would be wrong for the minister to seem to point at them in his public services; this would only irritate and do harm, and might lead to unpleasant altercation: it will be wiser and better for him to make the services truly Christian, and conduct them as he would if no such persons were present. If the services be judiciously conducted, and the members of your congregations conduct themselves in a truly Christian manner, you will sustain no injury from a few Unbelievers attending on your public services, and being treated with candour, liberality and respect.

My remarks on this subject having swelled beyond what I had expected, I must reserve what I have further to say on the treatment of Unbelievers by Christian congregations to my next letter; in the mean time I direct your attention to the Monthly Repository, where a controversy on this subject is going on: and remain, most truly yours, &c.

R. WRIGHT.

Cedars of Lebanon.

THE extract from Harris, relating to the small number of Cedar Trees in Lebanon, given in our last number, p. 220, is agreeable to the representations of many other writers, but is improbable in itself, and is at variance with the report of some modern travellers of the highest credit. The following interesting passage is from the journals of Mr *Fisk*, the American missionary to the Holy Land. We

take it from the *Missionary Register* of December, 1824. There is much sense in the concluding observations,

"Instead of being on the highest summit of Lebanon, as has sometimes been said, the Cedars are situated at the foot of a high mountain, in what may be considered as the arena of a vast amphitheatre, opening to the west, with high mountains on the north, south and east. They stand on five or six gentle elevations, and occupy a spot of ground about three-fourths of a mile in circumference. I walked round it in fifteen minutes. We measured a number of the trees. The largest is upwards of forty feet in circumference. Six or eight others are also very large; several of them nearly the size of the largest: but each of these is manifestly two trees or more, which have grown together, and now form one. They generally separate a few feet from the ground into the original trees. The handsomest and tallest are those of two or three feet in diameter, the body straight, the branches almost horizontal, forming a beautiful cone, and casting a goodly shade. We measured the length of two by the shade, and found each about ninety feet. The largest are not so high, but some of the others, I think, are a little higher. They produce a conical fruit, in shape and size like that of the pine. I counted them, and made the whole number 389. Mr. King counted them, omitting the small saplings, and made the number 321. I know not why travellers and authors have so long and so generally given 28, 20, 15, 5, or 7, as the number of the cedars. It is true, that of those of superior size and antiquity, there are not a great number; but then there is a regular gradation in size, from the largest down to the merest sapling. One man of whom I inquired, told me that there are cedars in other places in Mount Lebanon, but he could not tell where. Several others, to whom I have put the question, have unanimously assured me that these are the only cedars which exist on the mountain. The Maronites tell me that they have an annual feast, which they call the Feast of the Cedars.

"Before seeing the cedars, I had met with a European traveller who had just visited them. He gave a short account of them; and concluded with saying, 'It is as with miracles—the wonder all vanishes when you reach the spot.' What is there at which an Infidel cannot sneer? Yet let even an Infidel put himself in the place of an Asiatic—passing from barren desert to barren desert—travers-

ing oceans of sand and mountains of naked rock—accustomed to countries like Egypt, Arabia, Judea, and Asia Minor, abounding in the best places only with shrubbery and fruit trees; let him, with the feelings of such a man, climb the ragged rocks, and pass the open ravines of Lebanon, and suddenly descry among the hills a grove of 300 trees, such as the cedars actually are, even at the present day, and he will confess THAT to be a fine comparison in Amos ii. 9: *Whose height was like the height of the cedars, and he was strong as the oaks.* Let him, after a long ride in the heat of the sun, sit down under the shade of a cedar, and contemplate the exact conical form of its top, and the beautiful symmetry of its branches; and he will no longer wonder that David compared the people of Israel, in the days of their prosperity, to the *goodly cedars*: Ps. lxxx. 10. A traveller who had just left the forests of America, might think this little grove of cedars not worthy of so much notice; but the man who knows how rare large trees are in Asia, and how difficult it is to find timber for building, will feel at once that what is said in scripture of these trees is perfectly natural. It is probable that, in the days of Solomon and Hiram, there were extensive forests of cedars on Lebanon: a variety of causes may have contributed to their diminution and almost total extinction; yet, in comparison with all the other trees that I have seen on the mountain, the few that remain may still be called *the glory of Lebanon.*"

Harris's Natural History of the Bible.

In our last number (pp. 218—226) we extracted several passages from this valuable compilation of Eastern "Natural History," with a view to illustrate the Scriptures: we proceed to lay before our readers a few more interesting extracts.

To us northern readers of the Bible the *Palm-tree* is associated with many pleasant ideas; Dr. Harris thus describes this fine production of warm climates:

"PALM-TREE. TAMAR. Occurs first Exod. xv. 27, and afterwards frequently.

"This tree, sometimes called the date-tree, grows plentifully in the East. It rises to a great height. The stalks are generally full of rugged knots, which are the vestiges of the decayed leaves: for the trunk of this tree is not

solid like other trees, but its centre is filled with pith, round which is a tough bark full of strong fibres when young, which, as the tree grows old, hardens and becomes ligneous. To this bark the leaves are closely joined, which in the centre rise erect, but after they are advanced above the vagina which surrounds them, they expand very wide on every side the stem, and as the older leaves decay, the stalk advances in height. The leaves, when the tree has grown to a size for bearing fruit, are six or eight feet long; are very broad when spread out, and are used for covering the tops of houses, &c.

"The fruit, which is called 'date,' grows below the leaves in clusters, and is of a sweet and agreeable taste. The learned Kæmpfer, as a botanist, an antiquary, and a traveller, has exhausted the whole subject of palm-trees. 'The diligent natives (says Mr. Gibbon) celebrated, either in verse or prose, the three hundred and sixty uses to which the trunk, the branches, the leaves, the juice, and the fruit were skilfully applied.' The extensive importance of the date-tree (says Dr. Clarke*) is one of the most curious subjects to which a traveller can direct his attention. A considerable part of the inhabitants of Egypt, of Arabia and Persia, subsist almost entirely upon its fruit. They boast also of its medicinal virtues. Their camels feed upon the date stone. From the leaves they make couches, baskets, bags, mats, and brushes; from the branches, cages for their poultry and fences for their gardens; from the fibres of the boughs, thread, ropes and rigging; from the sap is prepared a spirituous liquor; and the body of the tree furnishes fuel: it is even said, that from one variety of the palm-tree, the *phœnix farinifera*, meal has been extracted, which is found among the fibres of the trunk, and has been used for food.

"In the temple of Solomon were pilasters made in the form of palm-trees. 1 Kings vi. 29. It was under a tree of this kind that Deborah dwelt between Ramah and Bethel. Judges iv. 5. To the fair, flourishing, and fruitful condition of this tree, the Psalmist very aptly compares the votary of virtue: Psalm xcii. 12—14.

"*The righteous shall flourish like a palm-tree.
Those that are planted in the house of JEHOVAH,
In the courts of our God, shall flourish;*

* Travels, Part H. Sect. ii. p. 302.

*In old age they shall still put forth buds,
They shall be full of sap and vigorous.**

"The palm is crowned at its top with a large tuft of spring leaves, about four feet long, which never fall off, but always continue in the same flourishing verdure. The tree, as Dr. Shaw was informed, is in its greatest vigour about thirty years after it is planted; and continues in full vigour seventy years longer, bearing all this while, every year, about three or four hundred pounds' weight of dates.

"The trunk of the tree is remarkably strait and lofty. Jeremiah, ch. x. 5, speaking of the idols that were carried in procession, says they were upright as the palm-tree. And for erect stature and slenderness of form, the spouse, in Cantic. vii. 7, is compared to this tree.

*"How framed, O my love, for delights!
Lo, thy stature is like a palm-tree,
And thy bosom like clusters of dates.*

"On this passage Mr. Good observes, that 'the very word *Tamar*, here used for the *palm-tree*, and whose radical meaning is *strait* or *upright* (whence it was afterwards applied to pillars or columns, as well as to the palm), was also a general name among the ladies of Palestine, and unquestionably adopted in honour of the stature they had already acquired, or gave a fair promise of attaining.'

"A branch of palm was a signal of victory, and was carried before conquerors in the triumphs: to this allusion is made Rev. vii. 9, and for this purpose were they borne before Christ in his way to Jerusalem, John xii. 13.

"From the inspissated sap of the tree a kind of honey, or *dispe*, as it is called, is produced, little inferior to that of bees. The same juice, after fermentation, makes a sort of wine, much used in the East. It is once mentioned as *wine*, Numb. xxviii. 7, (comp. Exod. xxix. 40); and by it is intended *strong drink*, Isaiah v. 11, xxiv. 9. Theodoret and Chrysostom, on these places, both Syrians and unexceptionable witnesses in what belongs to their own country, confirm this declaration. 'This liquor (says Dr. Shaw), which has a more luscious sweetness than honey, is of the consistence of a thin sirup, but quickly grows tart and ropy, acquiring an intoxicating quality, and giving

* "In Mr. Merrick's *Annotations*, p. 194, is a very ingenious illustration of this passage."

by distillation an agreeable spirit, or *aráky*, according to the general name of these people for all hot liquors, extracted by the alembic.' Its Hebrew name is *Síker*, the *Eíkera* of the Greeks; and from its sweetness, probably, the *Saccharum* of the Romans. Jerom informs us, that *in* Hebrew, 'any inebriating liquor is called *Sicera*, whether made of grain, the juice of apples, honey, dates, or any other fruit.'

"Herodotus, *Hist. Clio*, § 193, in his account of Assyria, says, 'The *Palm* is very common in this country, and generally fruitful. This they cultivate like fig-trees, and it produces them bread, wine and honey. The process observed is this: they fasten the fruit of that which the Greeks term the male tree to the one which produces the date; by this means the worm which is contained in the former, entering the fruit, ripens and prevents it from dropping immaturity. The male palms bear insects in their fruit in the same manner as the wild fig-trees.'

"Upon this subject the learned and industrious Larcher, in his notes upon Herodotus, has exhausted no less than ten pages. The ancients whom he cites are Aristotle, Theophrastus and Pliny; the moderns are Pontedera and Tournefort, which last he quotes at considerable length. The *Amœnitates Exoticæ* of Kæmpfer will fully satisfy whoever wishes to be more minutely informed on one of the most curious and interesting subjects which the science of natural history involves.

"This tree was formerly of great value and esteem among the Israelites, and so very much cultivated in Judea that, in after times, it became the emblem of that country, as may be seen in a medal of the Emperor Vespasian upon the conquest of Judea: it represents a captive woman sitting under a palm tree, with this inscription, *JUDEA CAPTA*. And upon a Greek coin, likewise, of his son Titus, struck upon the like occasion, we see a shield suspended upon a palm tree with a victory writing upon it. Pliny also calls Judea '*palmis inclyta*,' renowned for palms.

"Jericho in particular was called 'the city of palms,' Deut. xxxiv. 3, and 2 Chron. xxviii. 15, because, as Josephus, Strabo and Pliny have remarked, it anciently abounded in palm-trees. And so Dr. Shaw, Trav. p. 343, remarks, that though these trees are not now either plentiful or fruitful in other parts of the Holy Land, yet there

are several of them at Jericho, where there is the convenience they require of being often watered; where likewise the climate is warm and the soil sandy, or such as they thrive and delight in.

"*Tamar*, a city built in the desert by Solomon (1 Kings ix. 18; comp. Ezek. xlvii. 19, xlviii. 28), was probably so named from the palm-trees growing about it, as it was afterwards by the Romans called '*Palmyra*,' or rather '*Palmira*,' on the same account, from *Palma*, a palm-tree. It is otherwise named *TADMOR*, which seems a corruption of the former appellation. 2 Chron. viii. 4. Josephus, *Antiq.* l. viii. c. 6. § 1, tells us, that after Solomon had built several other cities, 'he entered the desert which is above Syria, and, taking possession of it, erected there a *very large city*, distant two days' journey from Upper Syria, one from the Euphrates, and six from Babylon; and that the reason of his building at such a distance from the inhabited parts of Syria was, that no water was to be met with nearer, but that at this place were found both springs and wells.' And this account agrees with that of the late learned traveller Mr. Wood, who describes *Palmyra* as watered with two streams, and says the Arabs even mention a third now lost among the rubbish. Josephus adds, that 'Solomon having built this city, and surrounded it with very strong walls, named it *Thadamora*, and that it was still so called by the Syrians in his time, but, by the Greeks '*Palmira*.' Mr. Parkhurst, after quoting this passage, makes these remarks: 'With all due deference to such learned men as may dissent from me, I apprehend that *Palmira* was a name first imposed, not by the Greeks, but by the Romans. There is no Greek word from whence this appellation can *probably* be derived; but *Palmira* from *Palma*, is the very oriental name translated into Latin; and as the warm climate of this city, and its enjoying the benefit of water in the desert, make it highly probable that its Hebrew and Latin names refer to the *palm-trees* with which it once abounded, so Abul Feda,* a learned oriental geographer, who flourished in the fourteenth century, expressly mentions the *palm-tree* as common at *Palmyra* even in his time. I cannot find that this

* "For an account of whom see the Arabic authors mentioned at the end of Prideaux's *Life of Mahomet*, p. 153; and Herbelot, *Biblioth. Orient. in Aboulfeda*."

city is ever mentioned by any of the old Greek writers, not even by that accurate geographer Strabo; nor indeed in the Roman history is any notice taken of it, till Appian, in the fifth book of his civil wars, speaks of Mark Antony as attempting to plunder it. But for a farther account of the ancient history and present state of this once noble and powerful city, I with great pleasure refer the reader to Mr. Wood's curious, learned and magnificent work, entitled '*A Journey to Palmyra*,' and shall only add, that the Arabs of the country, like the Syrians in Josephus's time, still call it by its old name *Tadmor*; and that Mr. Bryant tells us he was assured by Mr. Wood, that 'if you were to mention Palmyra to an Arab upon the spot, he would not know to what you alluded, nor would you find him at all better acquainted with the history of *Odænatus* and *Zenobia*. Instead of *Palmyra*, he would talk of *Tedmor*; and in lieu of *Zenobia*, he would tell you that it was built by *Salmah Ebn-Doud*, that is by Solomon the son of David.'

"As the Greek name for this tree signifies also the fabulous bird called the phoenix, some of the fathers have absurdly imagined that the Psalmist, xcii. 12, alludes to the latter; and on his authority have made the phoenix an argument of a resurrection. Tertullian calls it a full and striking emblem of this hope.

"Celsius, in the second volume of his Hierobotanicon, has devoted *one hundred and thirty-five pages*, replete with learning, to a description of the *palm-tree*, and an elucidation of the passages of scripture where it is mentioned; and Hiller, in his Hierophyticon, has *thirty-eight pages*."

The *Stork* is a fertile scriptural text.

"**STORK.** *Hebrew, CHASIDAH.* Occurs Levit. xi. 19; Dent. xiv. 8; Job xxxix. 13; Psalm civ. 17; Jer. viii. 7; Zech. v. 9.

"A bird similar to the crane in size, has the same formation as to the bill, neck, legs, and body, but is rather more corpulent. The colour of the crane is ash and black; that of the stork is white and brown. The nails of its toes are also very peculiar; not being clawed like those of other birds, but flat like the nails of a man. It has a very long beak and long red legs. It feeds upon serpents, frogs and insects, and on this account might be reckoned by Moses among unclean birds: as it seeks for these in watery places, nature has provided it with long legs; and as it flies away, as well as the crane and heron, to its nest with

its plunder, therefore its bill is strong and jagged, the sharp hooks of which enable it to retain its slippery prey.

"It has long been remarkable for its love to its parents, whom it never forsakes, but tenderly feeds and cherishes when they have become old and unable to provide for themselves. The very learned and judicious Bochart has collected a variety of passages from the ancients, wherein they testify this curious particular, that the stork is eminent for its performance of what St. Paul enjoins, *children's requiting their parents*. Its very name in the Hebrew language, *chasida*, signifies *mercy* or *piety*: and its English name is taken, if not directly, yet secondarily, through the Saxon, from the Greek word *storgé*, which is often used in our language for natural affection.

"The Stork's an emblem of true piety;
Because, when age has seized and made his dam
Unfit for flight, the grateful young one takes
His mother on his back, provides her food,
Repaying thus her tender care of him,
Ere he was fit to fly.

BEAUMONT.

"The reader may find a number of testimonies to the same purport in Scheuchzer's *Physica Sacra*: to which it may not be amiss to add what follows from 'the Inspector,' No. 171, a periodical paper, ascribed to that eminent naturalist, Sir John Hill. The author, after having remarked the high antiquity and continued tradition of the opinion, that *young storks* requite their parents by tending and supporting them when grown old, proceeds thus: 'Among those who have given their relation without the ornaments or the exaggeration of poetry or fable, is Burcherodde, a Dane: his account is the most full and particular of all, and he appears a person of gravity and fidelity. He tells us he relates *what he has seen*. 'Storks build (says he) in the prefecture of Eyderstede, in the southern part of Jutland; and men may be taught by looking upon them. They are large birds, like herons, of a white colour, with black wings and red feet. In a retired part of Eyderstede, some leagues from Toningén, towards the German sea, there are *clusters of trees*. *Among these they build*; and if any creature comes near them in the nesting season, which lasts near three months, they go out in a body to attack it. The peasants never hurt them, and they are in no fear of them.

“ The two parents guard and feed each brood, one always remaining on it, while the other goes for food. They keep the young ones much longer in the nest than any other bird, and after they have led them out of it by day, they bring them back at night; *preserving it as their natural and proper home.*

“ When they first take out the young, they practise them to fly; and they lead them to the marshes and to the hedge-sides, pointing them out the frogs, and serpents, and lizards, which are their proper food: and they seek out toads, which they never eat,* and take great pains to make the young distinguish them. In the end of autumn, not being able to bear the winter of Denmark, they gather in a great body about the sea-coasts, as we see swallows do, *and go off together:* the old ones leading the young ones in the centre, and a second body of the old behind. They return in spring and betake themselves in families to their several nests. The people of Toningen and the neighbouring coasts gather together to see them come; for they are superstitious, and form certain presages from the manner of their flight. *At this time it is not uncommon to see several of the old birds, which are tired and feeble with the long flight, supported at times on the backs of the young; and the peasants speak of it as a certainty, that many of these are, when they return to their home, laid carefully in the old nests, and cherished by the young ones which they reared with so much care the spring before.*

“ If the account this gentleman gives be singular (says Sir John), it is in no part unnatural. We see innumerable instances of what we call *instinct*; and who shall say that this is too great for credit? Who shall lay down the laws to determine where the gifts of a Creator to his creatures shall stop, or how they shall be limited?

“ The word CHASIDA, (says Mr. Merrick,) in his Commentary on Psalm civ. 17, is variously rendered by the ancient interpreters: but Bochart observes, that the bird called by this name appears from scripture to be a bird of passage; a circumstance which belongs to none of the birds which the ancient versions suppose to be thus named, except the kite and the stork. Professor Michaëlis says, that the

* “ This circumstance is countenanced by Linnæus, who, mentioning the food of the *stork*, expressly says, that though they eat frogs, they avoid toads.”

word is generally translated the stork; but adds, that this translation is founded on the authority of the Jews of the tenth century, and on that of the illustrious author of the Hierozoicon: but these writers themselves, says he, have been led by an arbitrary etymology to this interpretation, which is not, perhaps, to be met with in any of the ancient versions. To which we may answer, that this interpretation is certainly of earlier date than the tenth century; since Olympiodorus, in his commentary on Job (a work old enough to be mentioned by Anastasius Sinaita, who lived about the year 680), mentions, though with disapprobation, some interpreters who affirmed the CHASIDA to be the stork. M. Michaëlis thinks that this text of the Psalms, *As far the stork the fir-trees are her house*, makes against the stork; as though it be true that this bird sometimes builds on trees, yet it generally chooses to build on the tops of houses. Yet the same learned gentleman very judiciously proposes, that it be inquired whether, as, in the eastern countries, the roofs of houses are flat and inhabited, this very circumstance may not oblige them to build elsewhere. The following passage from Dr. Shaw's Travels may, at first, seem to determine the question: 'The storks breed plentifully in Barbary every summer. They make their nests with dry twigs of trees, which they place upon the highest parts of old ruins or houses, in the canals of ancient aqueducts, and frequently (so familiar are they by being never molested) upon the very tops of their mosques and dwelling-houses. The *fir* and other trees, when these are wanting, are a dwelling for the stork.' Here we see the storks building their nests upon the tops of the eastern houses; but, as Dr. Shaw has just before informed us, that the Mahometans account it profane to kill, or even hurt or molest them (to which we may add, from Hasselquist, that those persons among the Turks who own a house where storks have nested, are supposed to receive great blessings from heaven and to be free from all misfortunes), their access to the roofs is free and undisturbed; which might not be the case in Judea, where no such supposition appears to have prevailed. That they sometimes build on trees is allowed by M. Michaëlis himself, and confirmed by J. H. Michaëlis in his Commentary on the Psalms. It may be still more to our purpose to observe, that Olympiodorus (who cannot well be supposed to have borrowed the idea from this psalm, as he does not allow the CHASIDA

to be the stork) affirms, in the place above referred to, that the stork lays its eggs, not on the ground, but on high trees. Bochart quotes also an Arabic writer, who says of this bird, it builds its nest in some very lofty place, either on the top of a tower or tree. A passage which he quotes from Varro, as it distinguishes the stork's manner of building from that of the swallow, seems greatly to favour our interpretation. Aldrovandus affirms of the black stork, that they are wont to make their nest on trees, particularly on *fir-trees*. And Strahlenberg speaks of storks that frequent great forests. The word *agyst*, continues Mr. Merrick, which he mentions as the Russian name of one kind of stork, does not seem so remote from the Hebrew name, but that it might possibly be derived from it, and may, on inquiry, lead to the discovery of some other name of that bird in languages akin to the Russian, which approach still nearer to it.

“ Besides, the Psalmist does not say that the CHASIDA makes its nest on the fir-trees, but that the fir-trees are its house; which may mean no more (to borrow the expression of Mr. Harmer, Obs. V. iv. p. 175) than that ‘there they rest, there they sleep, after the wanderings of the day are over.’ And Doubdan, as cited by the same author, positively affirms, that the prodigiously numerous *storks* which he saw between Cana and Nazareth, in Palestine, did, ‘in the evening, rest on trees,’ that is, they roosted there. Jackson, in his *Account of Morocco*, p. 64, says, ‘they are considered as sacred birds, and it is sacrilegious to kill one; for, besides being of the greatest utility in destroying serpents and other noxious reptiles, they are also emblematical of faith and conjugal affection, and on that account held in the highest estimation. They build their nests, which are curious, on the top of some old tower or castle, or on the terraces of uninhabited houses, where they constantly watch their young, exposed to the scorching rays of the sun. They will not suffer any one to approach their nests.’

“ I have already remarked that it is a bird of passage. It is spoken of as such in scripture. Jer. viii. 7, ‘The stork knoweth her appointed time,’ &c.

“ ‘Who bid the stork, Columbus like, explore
Heavens not its own, and worlds unknown before?’

Who calls the council, states the certain day,
Who forms the phalanx, and who points the way?"

POPE.

"Bochart has collected testimonies of the migration of storks. Ælian, l. iii. c. 13, says, that in summer time they remain stationary, but at the close of autumn they repair to Egypt, Libya and Ethiopia. 'For about the space of a fortnight before they pass from one country to another, (says Dr. Shaw,) they constantly resort together, from all the adjacent parts, in a certain plain; and there forming themselves, once every day, into a *douwanne*, or *council*' (according to the phrase of these eastern nations), are said to determine the exact time of their departure, and the place of their future abodes."

"These particulars are thus recited by 'the Poet of the Seasons:'

"——— 'The stork-assembly meets; for many a day
Consulting deep and various, ere they take
Their arduous voyage through the liquid sky.
And now their route design'd, their leaders chose,
Their tribes adjusted, clean'd their vigorous wings,
And many a circle, many a short essay,
Wheel'd round and round, in congregation full
The figured flight ascends; and riding high
The aërial billows, mixes with the clouds."

THOMSON.

"Milton also has described the flight of these birds:

" 'Part loosely wing the region, part, more wise,
In common, ranged in figure, wedge their way,
Intelligent of seasons, and set forth
Their airy caravan, high over seas
Flying, and over lands, with mutual wing
Easing their flight.'"

We add to these extracts one more article, the *Whale*, in his account of which it will be seen that the author is not a stranger or an enemy to free Biblical Criticism.

"**WHALE.** Hebrew **THAN** and **THANNIN**. Occurs in our translation, Gen. i. 21; Job vii. 12; and Ezek. xxxii. 2. **KETOS**, Matt. xii. 40.

"The largest of all the inhabitants of the water.

"It is well ascertained that the writers of the Bible

must have been ignorant of this animal; as it is never seen near Jerusalem or Egypt, and as they could have no history of Greenland and Spitzbergen. And a late author,* in a dissertation expressly for the purpose, has proved that the crocodile, and not the whale, is spoken of in Gen. i.

21. I shall transcribe his concluding argument.

“ ‘There yet remains an argument which proves that the crocodile, and not the whale, is to be understood in Gen. i. 21. At whatever time Moses wrote the book of Genesis, whether before or after the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, to assure them that the Lord their God was the creator of the crocodile has a manifest propriety, which is not to be found in the present translation. For he might naturally suppose, should they incline to idolatry, one of the first objects of their adoration would be the crocodile, which they had seen worshiped in Egypt.’

“ And Dr. Geddes† thinks that the circumstance of its being an Egyptian divinity, might induce the historian to particularize it, as being but a mere creature, like the rest.

“ The word in Job vii. 12, must also be for the crocodile. It must mean some terrible animal, which, but for the watchful care of Divine Providence, would be very destructive. Our translators render it *dragon* in Isai. xxvii. 1, where the prophet gives this name to the king of Egypt: *He shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.* The *sea* there is the river Nile, and the *dragon*, the crocodile. Compare Ezek. xxxii. 2.

“ On this passage Bochart remarks, the THANNIN is not a *whale*, as people imagine; for a whale has neither feet nor scales, neither is it to be found in the rivers of Egypt; neither does it ascend therefrom upon the land; neither is it taken in the meshes of a net: all of which properties are ascribed by Ezekiel to the THANNIN of Egypt. Whence it is plain that it is not a whale that is here spoken of, but the crocodile.

“ Merrick supposes David, in Psalm lxxiv. 13, to speak of the *tunnie*, a kind of whale, with which he was probably acquainted: and Bochart thinks it has its Greek name *thunnos* from the Hebrew *thanot*. The last-mentioned fish is undoubtedly that spoken of in Psalm civ. 6.

* “Rev. James Hurd’s, ‘Critical Dissertation upon the true Meaning of the Hebrew Word translated *Whale*, in Gen. i. 21.’ 8vo. 1790.”

† “New translation of Gen. i. annexed to his proposals, &c.”

“ We are told that, in order to preserve the prophet Jonah, when he was thrown overboard by the mariners, ‘ the Lord prepared a great fish to swallow him up.’ What kind of fish it was is not specified : but the Greek translators take the liberty to give us the word *ketos* (whale), and though St. Matthew, xii. 40, makes use of the same word, we may conclude that he did so in a general sense ; and that we are not to understand it as an appropriated term, to point out the particular species of the fish ; since the naturalists have informed us, that the make of the whale will not permit it to swallow a human body, as the shark and some other of the water animals are known to be capable of doing : and it is notorious that sharks are a species of fish common in the Mediterranean.

“ Bochart and Linnæus suppose it the *charcarias*, or *tamia*, which has a throat and belly so prodigiously great that it can easily swallow a man without the least hurt. It is much more natural to believe that it was one of these fishes who swallowed Jonah, than to multiply miracles without necessity, by supposing that God, who kept him alive for three days in the belly of the fish, should have brought a whale from the northern coasts, and then enlarge its throat for his reception.

“ Our Lord observes, Luke xi. 30, that Jonas, ‘ *was a sign to the Ninevites* ;’ and it may be well worth remarking, that the fame of the prophet’s miraculous preservation was so widely propagated as to reach even Greece ; whence, as several learned men have observed, was, no doubt, derived the story of Hercules escaping alive out of a fish’s belly, which is alluded to by Lycophron, who calls Hercules,

“ That famed *three-nighted* lion, whom of old
Triton’s *carcharian* dog, with horrid jaws
Devoured.

“ That is, (says Bochart,) whom the *canis charcarias*, or shark, sent by Neptune, swallowed.

“ Thus the poet not only agrees with the Scripture account of Jonah as to the time his hero remained entombed, but even mentions the very species of fish by which it is most probable that the prophet was swallowed. Æneas Gazæus, however, calls the fish that devoured Hercules, as the LXX. and St. Matthew do that which swallowed Jonah, *KETOS*. ‘ *As Hercules also is reported, when he was ship-*

wrecked, to have been swallowed by a [KETOS] whale, and yet to have been saved.*

"The author of '*Fragments, &c, as an Appendix to Calmet*,' No. cxlv., explains this, not of a living animal, but a floating preserver, by which Jonah was saved from drowning. He remarks, that though DAG signifies primarily 'a fish,' yet that it also signifies 'a fish-boat,' and figuratively 'a preserver.' So that the passage will admit of being rendered, 'The Lord prepared a large DAG [preserver] to receive Jonah, and Jonah was in the inner part [the belly, or hold] of this DAGAH, three days and nights, and then was cast up on the shore.'† This allusion is adverted to by our Lord, Matt. xii. 40, who says, 'Jonah was in the hollow cavity of the KETOS three days and nights, so shall the Son of man be in the heart of the earth.'‡

"The word 'whale' occurs in the translation of Ecclesiasticus xliii. 25, and in the 'Song of the three children,' v. 57: in both which the Greek word KETOS is used."

Mr. H. Clarke's Address to Trinitarians, on their affected Pity for Unitarians.

Frenchay, Bristol,
July 7, 1826.

TRINITARIAN CHRISTIANS,

You doubtless think your religious sentiments scriptural; consequently you deem Antitrinitarianism unscriptural. To your entertaining these opinions there can be no fair objection if you hold the first in Christian humility and the last with Christian forbearance. You are entitled, nay you are necessitated, to consider those whose religious views differ from yours, as being in error. Every Christian must possess the same right, and be laid under the same necessity, of concluding, that all who do not think with him are wrong. We all believe our own theological

* "The reader may see more on this subject in Bochart, Hieroz. V. iii. p. 687; Vossius de Orig. Idol. l. ii. c. 15; Grotius de Verit. l. i. § 16, not. 105; and the author of '*Fragments in addition to Calmet*,' in his '*Investigations on the Dag of Jonah*.'"

† "Surely it is as rational to think God made use of a ship, called *Dag*, to preserve Jonah, as to suppose that all the laws of nature were suspended, and a number of miracles performed to accomplish the same purpose."

‡ "Great ships were called 'ketos.'"

tenets true, and those of others erroneous. To think otherwise is impossible. For, from the instant an individual receives as true any particular opinion, he must consider all those which are of an opposite kind false. No one, for instance, can, by any mental process whatever, possibly believe, at one and the same time, that God consists of three persons, and that he is but one person. A man may, at different periods of his life, alternately believe most firmly each of these propositions, but while he considers either true, he must inevitably esteem the other false.

Thus you differ from the Unitarian and he differs from you, and both are led by the very same law of the mind to look upon each other as erring from the truth. But must each therefore anathematize the other? Must both indulge in "bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, and malice"? Or, if one party only be allowed the prerogative to condemn, to which shall it be awarded? If any thing be clear it is this, that the nature of the questions at issue among Christians, the diversity of opinion resulting therefrom, and the spirit of Christianity, unite to declare that all are fallible; that the right to condemn for religious sentiments belongs to no human being; and that mutual candour and charity are indispensable.

He who dares to pronounce that certain theological opinions must incur the displeasure of God, and to consign his differing fellow-christian to perdition, assumes infallibility, breaks the command and arrogates the authority of the Saviour. All this, however, you do when you assert that Unitarianism is a dangerous system, and that its espousers cannot be saved. And you do the very same thing when you say to the Unitarian, "I am sorry for you, and pity you." Sorry for him, for what? Because he is in dangerous error, you reply. Pity him, why? Because he cannot with those opinions be saved, you answer. If you disown these replies, then you cannot talk of pity and sorrow; for upon nothing else can such feelings possibly rest but the supposition that the individual's sentiments must lead to future misery. So that to say to a Unitarian, "I am sorry for you, and pity you," is to

" Judge him for modes of faith God's foe,
And doom him to the realms of woe."

But to be qualified thus to determine, you must be posses-

sed of infallibility. Presumptuous man, "who made thee a judge?"

But the sincerity of your professions of sorrow and pity may most justly be questioned. When we really possess these feelings we are anxious to assist the object of them; and even should he refuse our proffered aid, our deep concern for his case totally disallows anger at his conduct. But do you enter dispassionately, and in the spirit of love, into the investigation of the religious differences between you and the Unitarian? And are you quite free from anger when you have failed to convince him that he is wrong? If you are unable to give unequivocal, affirmative answers to these questions, then it cannot be true that you are sorry for him and pity him. No, that to which you give the soft names sorrow and pity, is in reality unholy anger.

Another serious objection to your use of the language under consideration, is the gross injustice of its application. If a Unitarian were to address it to you, would you not be displeased? Most certainly you would; for you think your opinions true, and could not like to be pitied and mourned over as being in fatal error. The Unitarian must feel just the same, and you know who has said, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them."

When, then, you substitute the before-named language for argument, you are carried away by "a zeal not according to knowledge," rashly to utter what can scarcely be true, presumptuously to assume infallibility, and daringly to violate the rule of equity and justice prescribed by Christ himself. It is true that you may do this, under the mistaken notion of rendering service to God and to Christ. But if there be truth in revelation, such conduct must be highly displeasing to both. If you maintain that it cannot be so, because those whom you thus treat are, according to your opinion, in error, then must you allow, that upon the very same principle it would be perfectly right in those who differ from you to treat you in the same manner. And then too, must you grant, that the Smithfield fires were sanctioned by Christianity, and pleasing to God. For those who lighted them, thought themselves right; considered those whom they burnt, wrong; and professed to destroy the body for the good of the soul.

If a man say to another, "You will be lost unless you

believe as I do," there is too much reason to conclude that it would be so if he who pronounces such a sentence were possessed of power to carry it into effect. But I will venture to say, that such an expression never dropped from the lips or flowed from the pen of any Unitarian. Now, if you are right and they wrong, must it not follow that their error is better calculated to produce candour, liberality, and Christian love, than your truth? "By their fruits ye shall know them," is a reply furnished by the infallible Judge of truth.

Jesus also proclaims, "He that is not against us, is on our part." The Unitarian professes to believe, that he who thus speaks came from God; spake the words of God; wrought miracles by the finger of God; was by God made both Lord and Christ; is he by whom God will judge the world in righteousness; and that, therefore, he is to be obeyed in all things as a divinely-appointed instructor and sure guide to endless bliss. Is he then against Christ, because when he prays he says, as his Lord hath taught him, "Our Father," and worships the Father alone, believing this to be true worship, because Jesus hath said so; instead of saying, O God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, and *worshipping a Trinity*? You of course think the Almighty should be worshiped by these three names, as being those of the persons of the Trinity; but before you pronounce, with so much confidence, that this is the form of worship God hath prescribed, and express surprise at those who cannot conscientiously use such a form, would it not be well seriously to consider and impartially to weigh the reasons that are assigned for the strict and simple unity, the unrivalled supremacy and exclusive Deity of the Father?

The Unitarian's language is, "I believe all the doctrines that are clearly taught in the Bible; but I can nowhere in the sacred volume read such phrases as *God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, the persons of the Godhead, co-eternal Son, the Trinity*, and similar expressions, and therefore I cannot allow them to be scriptural; I dare not admit them to be parts of revealed truth." Ought this to be met by you with haughty sarcasm, angry reproof, and bitter anathemas? Will Christ, at his second coming, commend and reward you for so doing, think you? But we are assured, that love of God and love of man shall be rewarded in that day. It must therefore be wiser and safer to attach supreme im-

portance to these than to a mere belief of the doctrine of the Trinity, especially when we do know that, notwithstanding the exalted titles that are given to Jesus on account of his mission and office, and although these may be so put together as to be made to countenance his deity, the loud and clear voice of Revelation proclaims, in unequivocal language, "THEN COMETH THE END, WHEN HE SHALL HAVE DELIVERED UP THE KINGDOM TO GOD, EVEN THE FATHER; THEN SHALL THE SON ALSO HIMSELF BE SUBJECT UNTO HIM THAT PUT ALL THINGS UNDER HIM, THAT GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL." What will then become of your Trinitarianism?

Trinitarian Christians, reflect! love charity, remember you are not infallible, do as you would be done by, and condemn no more.

HENRY CLARKE.

Singular Superstition in the Sandwich Islands.

THE principal South-Sea Islands have lately renounced idolatry, in whole or in part. The Missionary Society may claim the honour of having converted the Society Islands, of which the best known is Otaheite; but it is a curious fact that just before the first Missionaries, Americans, had visited Owyhee or Hawaii, and the other Sandwich islands, an enlightened prince, supported by intrepid chiefs, had abolished the religion of the country, on account of its costliness and cruelty. A war was the consequence, in which the Reformers were victorious. The King who paid a recent visit to this country, and unfortunately died on the eve of his return, was the enlightened prince referred to, by whose wisdom and valour superstition received its death-blow in the Sandwich Islands. The way is now opened in this interesting portion of the globe for the dissemination of divine truth, and both American and English Missionaries are labouring with industry, zeal and success. One of these, an Englishman, Mr. W. ELLIS, has just published, in an 8vo. volume, a "Narrative of a Tour through Hawaii, or Owyhee; with Remarks on the History, Traditions, Manners, Customs, and Language of the Inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands." This is a truly valuable, because an authentic work. Readers of all parties will be pleased with it. If many of the Missionaries in the South Seas equal Mr. Ellis in talents and resemble him in disposition, the great-

est possible good may be anticipated from their Christian exertions.

We are about to extract from Mr. Ellis's volume an account of a singular system of superstition, formerly prevailing in the Sandwich Islands under the name of *TABU*. This institution partook of the nature of the Hindu Caste, and in some of its features resembled the Papal Interdict. It was an admirable contrivance by which Priestcraft and Despotism in conjunction put their broad R upon the best productions of the country, and excluded the many from the participation of some of the common bounties of nature. It was only to declare any good thing *TABU*, and henceforward it was sacred to the use of Church and King. The hogs of the priests were *tabued*, and were let loose with the holy mark upon them, and though they committed ever so much mischief, it was held a capital crime to kill them. Natural fish-ponds, which abound in the Islands, have been secured by the same artifice to the privileged orders. The most curious item of *TABU*, however, is the *Ava* or drug of which is made the only intoxicating liquor of home-make; the *consecration* of which to the aristocracy preserves and confines to them the luxury and privilege of drunkenness. It is a pity that the Missionaries should contemplate the application of this superstition to the Sabbath, which might surely be recommended to the Hawaiians on the ground of expediency and utility. To *Tabu* the Sabbath is so far to paganize Christianity.

“ The *TABU* formed an important and essential part of their cruel system of idolatry, and was one of the strongest means of its support.

“ In most of the Polynesian dialects, the usual meaning of the word *tabu*, is *sacred*. It does not, however, imply any moral quality, but expresses a connexion with the gods, or a separation from ordinary purposes, and exclusive appropriation to persons or things considered sacred. Those chiefs who trace their genealogy to the gods, are called *arii tabu*, chiefs sacred from their supposed connexion with the gods; and a temple is called a *wahi tabu*, place sacred, because devoted exclusively to the abode and worship of the gods. It is a distinct word from *rahui*, to prohibit, as the *ohelo* berries at Kirauea were said to be prohibited, being *tabu na Pélé*, sacred for Pélé, and is opposed to the

word *noa*, which means general or common. Hence the system which prohibited females from eating with the men, and from eating, except on special occasions, any fruits or animals ever offered in sacrifice to gods, while it allowed the men to partake of them, was called the *Ai tabu*, eating sacred, while the present state of things is called the *Ai noa*, eating generally, or having food in common.

"This appears to be the legitimate meaning of the word *tabu*, though the natives, when talking with foreigners, use it more extensively, applying it to every thing prohibited or improper. This, however, is only to accommodate the latter, as they use *kaukau* (a word of Chinese origin) instead of the native word for eat, and *pikaninny*, for small, supposing they are thereby better understood.

"The *tabu*, separating whatever it was applied to from common use, and devoting it to the above purposes, was one of the most remarkable institutions among the South Sea Islanders; and though it prevailed with slight variations, in the different groups of the Pacific, it has not been met with in any other part of the world. Although employed for civil as well as sacred purposes, the *tabu* was entirely a religious ceremony, and could be imposed only by the priests. A religious motive was always assigned for laying it on, though it was often done at the instance of the civil authorities; and persons called *kiaimoku*, (island keepers,) a kind of police officers, were always appointed by the king to see that the *tabu* was strictly observed.

"The antiquity of the *tabu* was equal to the other branches of that superstition of which it formed so component a part, and its application was both general and particular, occasional and permanent. The idols, temples, persons, and names of the king, and members of the reigning family; the persons of the priests; canoes belonging to the gods; houses, clothes, and mats of the king and priests, and the heads of men who were the devotees of any particular idol,—were always *tabu*, or sacred. The flesh of hogs, fowls, turtle, and several other kinds of fish, coconuts, and almost every thing offered in sacrifice, were *tabu* to the use of the gods and the men; hence the women were, except in cases of particular indulgence, restricted from using them. Particular places, as those frequented by the king for bathing, were also rendered permanently *tabu*.

“ Sometimes an island or a district was tabued, when no canoe or person was allowed to approach it. Particular fruits, animals, and the fish of certain places, were occasionally tabu for several months from both men and women.

“ The seasons generally kept tabu, were on the approach of some great religious ceremony, immediately before going to war, and during the sickness of chiefs. Their duration was various, and much longer in ancient than modern times. Tradition states, that in the days of Umi, there was a tabu kept thirty years, during which the men were not allowed to trim their beards, &c. Subsequently there was one kept five years. Before the reign of Tamehameha, forty days was the usual period; during it, ten or five days, and sometimes one day.

“ The tabu seasons were either common or strict. During a common tabu, the men were only required to abstain from their usual avocations, and attend at the heiau when the prayers were offered every morning and evening. But during the season of strict tabu, every fire and light on the island or district must be extinguished; no canoe must be launched on the water, no person must bathe; and, except those whose attendance was required at the temple, no individual must be seen out of doors; no dog must bark, no pig must grunt, no cock must crow,—or the tabu would be broken, and fail to accomplish the object designed. On these occasions, they tied up the mouths of the dogs and pigs, and put the fowls under a calabash, or fastened a piece of cloth over their eyes. All the common people prostrated themselves with their faces touching the ground, before the sacred chiefs, when they walked out, particularly during tabu; and neither the king nor the priests were allowed to touch any thing; even their food was put into their mouths by another person.

“ The tabu was imposed either by proclamation, when the crier or herald of the priests went round, generally in the evening, requiring every light to be extinguished, the path by the sea to be left for the king, the paths inland to be left for the gods, &c. The people, however, were generally prepared, having had previous warning; though this was not always the case. Sometimes it was laid on by fixing certain marks called *unu unu*, the purport of which was well understood, on the places or things tabued. When the fish of a certain part are tabued, a small pole is fixed in the rocks on the coast, in the centre of the place,

to which is tied a bunch of bamboo leaves, or a piece of white cloth. A cocoa-nut leaf is tied to the stem of a tree when the fruit is tabued. The hogs which were tabu, having been devoted to the gods, had a piece of cinet wove through a perforation in one of their ears.

“The prohibitions and requisitions of the tabu were strictly enforced, and every breach of them punished with death, unless the delinquents had some very powerful friends who were either priests or chiefs. They were generally offered in sacrifice, strangled, or dispatched with a club or a stone within the precincts of the heiau, or they were burnt, as stated by Miomioi.

“An institution so universal in its influence, and so inflexible in its demands, contributed very materially to the bondage and oppression of the natives in general. The king, sacred chiefs, and priests, appear to have been the only persons to whom its application was easy; the great mass of the people were at no period of their existence exempt from its influence, and no circumstance in life could excuse their obedience to its demands. The females in particular felt all its humiliating and degrading force. From its birth, the child, if a female, was not allowed to be fed with a particle of food that had been kept in the father's dish, or cooked at his fire; and the little boy, after being weaned, was fed with his father's food, and as soon as he was able, sat down to meals with his father, while his mother was not only obliged to take hers in an out-house, but was interdicted from tasting the kind of which he ate. It is not surprising that the abolition of the tabu, effecting for them an emancipation so complete, and an amelioration so important, should be a subject of constant gratulation; and that every circumstance tending in the smallest degree to revive the former tabu should be viewed with the most distressing apprehensions. The only tabu they now have is the Sabbath, which they call the *La tabu*, (day sacred,) and to its extension and perpetuity those who understand it seem to have no objection. Philanthropy will rejoice that their fears respecting the former are not likely to be realized, for should Christianity not be embraced by some, and only nominally professed by others, so sensible are the great body of the people of the miseries of the tabu, that it is very improbable it will ever be re-established among them. On the other hand, there is every reason to hope that pure Christianity, which imposes none

but moral restrictions, and requires no appropriations but such as it will conduce to their own happiness to make, will eventually pervade every portion of the community; and that while it teaches them to render a reasonable homage and obedience to the only living and true God, and prepares them for the enjoyment of his presence in a future state, it will elevate the degraded classes, especially the females, to the rank and influence for which they were designed, and render their domestic society as rational and happy, as under the tabu it was abject and wretched."

Lines on a Monument in the Chancel of Ramsbury Church, written to the Memory of Miss Eleanora Burdett, who died Nov. 27, 1797, aged 26 Years, by her Brother, Sir Francis Burdett, Bart.

[This Epitaph has been published and republished in the newspapers: whether it be correctly attributed to the Patriotic Baronet, we have no means of ascertaining.]

Not formal duty prompts these mournful lays;
 No painted show of grief these lines impart;
 No cold, unfeeling, stale, insipid praise:
 But sorrow, flowing from the o'erfraught heart.

No need hast thou of monumental verse,
 Lamented maid! to prove thy worth was high;
 The widow's tear bedews thy modest hearse;
 Thy name is honour'd with the poor man's sigh.

The sons of want, with unavailing woe,
 To heaven their eyes in anguish must uprear,
 A thousand blessings on thy name bestow,
 Hang o'er thy grave, and drop the silent tear.

"Alas!" they cry, "that feeling heart is cold,
 That lib'ral hand which gave to all relief,
 That tongue, whose sweetness never can be told,
 Which charmed our ears, and soothed our sharpest grief!"

If thou can'st look, bright angel! from above,
 As to thy God thou bend'st th' adoring knee,
 Accept this tribute of a brother's love,
 And in thy orisons remember me!

Unitarianism of 1 Cor. xv. 27, 28.

SIR,

I WAS very much struck, a short time since, in reading the 27th and 28th verses of the 15th chapter of 1 Cor. : they appear to me almost sufficient to end the controversy respecting the equality of Christ to the Father. The words are the following : " For he hath put all things under him. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that He is excepted that did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son himself be subject unto him that did put all things under him, that God may be all in all." Observe how cautious the apostle seems of giving more than due glory to Christ, and, as if he was fearful of being misunderstood when he declares he is head over all things, he also adds, that he that gave him his power was superior even to him. I am not aware of any method by which a Trinitarian can evade the force of these passages ; for it must be self-evident, if Christ has been or will be in subjection to the Father, he cannot be truly and properly God : it is true he might make a Miltonian deity, but not the being to whom we could give the title of the " Only Potentate."

A BEREAN.

"Orthodox" Neglect of the Gospel.

A CORRESPONDENT in Wales has sent us a list of the texts preached from in a Wesleyan chapel for three successive months, with the following remark : " From this statement it will be seen that out of thirty-one sermons, delivered in three months, only six texts have been drawn from the gospels, and not one from the Acts of the Apostles. Can it be said in this case that the command of Christ (Mark xvi. 15) has been attended to ?"

The same correspondent observes : " 'The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.' 1 Cor. xv. 26. It is now publicly taught that man is (naturally) immortal ; now if this doctrine be true, there is no enemy to destroy. And though it is taught by the Arminians that man does not wholly die, because he is immortal, yet they believe (strange as it may appear), that the supreme God died, though he is immortal also ; hence they sing in their places of worship,

" ' O Love Divine ! what hast thou done ?

The immortal God hath died for me.'

“ Again,

“ ‘The Immortal hangs his languid brow,
The Almighty faints beneath his load.’

“ Call us not unbelievers because we refuse to believe an impossibility, that a God died, who is described by the great Apostle as Eternal, Immortal, and Invisible. 1 Tim. i. 7.”

INTELLIGENCE.

Mr. Harding's Journal of a Missionary Tour in the West of England.

SIR,

Cranbrook, June 17, 1826.

If you should think the following account of my Missionary labours in the west of England will be acceptable to your numerous readers, and in the smallest degree useful to the cause of divine truth, the insertion of the same in the Christian Reformer, will oblige yours,

M. HARDING.

My connexion with the Kent and Sussex Unitarian Association (after acting as Missionary for 4 years in the two counties, during which I travelled, chiefly on foot, nearly 7000 miles, and preached nearly 700 times, with a success which proves, that Unitarianism needs only the support and hearty co-operation of its real friends, to secure a glorious triumph over ignorance, superstition, and vice), being dissolved for want of sufficient funds, I accepted an invitation from the Somerset and Dorset Unitarian Association, to act as their Missionary for 6 months, and proceeded forthwith to the west of England, and arrived safely at Taunton, Nov 12, 1825. The next day, being Sunday, preached three times. The congregation is respectable in numbers, character, and property; as are indeed all the congregations in this part of the west.

Tuesday 15th, proceeded to Ilminster and Crewkerne, but did not preach at either of the above places, the friends not deeming it prudent to open their chapels on week evenings. I then travelled to Bridport, preached there Thursday evening 17th, and Sunday morning 20th, to rather large congregations. After the morning service, went to Crewkerne, and preached there in the evening to a comparatively large and serious company. Tuesday 22nd, walked to Ilminster. Mr. Whitfield the worthy Unitarian minister here, conceiving he had made arrangements for preaching the next evening at Chard, a populous manufacturing town, 13 miles S. S. E. of Taunton, I immediately proceeded thither, but on my arrival was disappointed, not being able to procure a room. The place it was supposed I should have occupied, belongs to a few individuals late in connexion

with the Rev. Mr. Baring, who contend that "the perfection of the Scriptures hath altogether superseded preaching." I had between two and three hours' conversation with them, in the course of which I perceived they were decidedly Antitrinitarians, serious and intelligent, but strongly prepossessed in favour of Calvinistic election, &c. There are many of this description in this part of the kingdom. The next day returned to Taunton, and on Friday evening preached at Wellington, Somerset, 15 miles N. E. of Exeter, in a private house, to a small company of serious persons, chiefly raised by the exertions of the Rev. H. Clarke, of Frenchay. Saturday 26th, travelled to Bridgewater, and the next day preached three times to very small congregations. Here are abundant materials for a flourishing cause. Tuesday 29th, returned to Taunton, and preached there in the evening to a tolerable company. Wednesday walked to Bridport, and preached there, Thursday evening 1st, and Sunday 4th of December, afternoon and evening, to large congregations. Wednesday 7th, went to Crewkerne, and preached there for the first and last time, on a week evening to a small number. The next morning proceeded a second time to Chard, and failed again in getting a room to preach in, but succeeded in discovering a respectable inhabitant, long reputed an infidel, to be an intelligent Unitarian Christian, who promised to aid the Mission here as far as his influence extended. Saturday 10th, proceeded to Yeovil, and preached there three times the next day, to small but attentive congregations. Tuesday following, travelled to Langport, a small town, where I had a very pleasing interview with a Unitarian gentleman residing there, who promised to aid the cause at Bridgewater. Wednesday 14th, went back to Taunton, preached there the next evening to a good company, and the following evening at Wellington to a few. Saturday 17th, journeyed to Bridgewater, and preached there twice the next day, to rather larger congregations. 23rd, preached again at Wellington, and 25th, three times at Taunton—in the evening to a very large congregation. 28th, preached at Honiton, a small town in Devon, to a very small company; thence proceeded to Ilminster, and on Sunday, 1st of January, 1826, preached there three times; in the afternoon and evening to large congregations. Sunday 8th, preached three times at Crewkerne, to attentive, and rather larger companies. 15th, three times at Yeovil, to congregations improved in number. Friday 20th, preached at Wellington, and on the 22nd, at Taunton three times, to increasingly large congregations. Sunday 29th, at Ilminster, three times; in the evening about 500 were present. Thursday, February 2nd, and Sunday 5th, preached four times at Bridport; in the evening about 600 persons were present. 12th, at Crewkerne three times, to tolerable congregations. 19th, in the morning at Bridgewater, to rather a large, and in the evening at Taunton

to a very large congregation. 22nd, at Wellington, and 26th in the morning at Crewkerne, and the afternoon and evening at Ilminster, to uncommonly large companies, the evening congregation amounting to not less than 600. This increase, under God, is to be mainly attributed to the zealous exertions of two pious and respectable young females, who, to their honour be it spoken, actually traversed the town, leaving printed notice papers at the respective houses. Thursday evening, March 2nd, and Sunday 5th, preached three times at Bridport, to the usual number. Monday 6th, walked to Ilminster, a distance of 21 miles, being one of the most tempestuous days I ever travelled in. This journey was undertaken for the purpose of officiating at the funeral of a Unitarian minister's widow. Having performed this engagement, I proceeded to Bridgewater, and Sunday 12th, preached there three times, to larger congregations than common. 15th, preached the last time at Wellington, and on the 19th, three times at Taunton. In the evening had the pleasure of concluding in the presence of a large congregation, a course of twelve Lectures, by different Ministers, which I trust will be productive of great and lasting good.

In consequence of an invitation from the Committee of the Wilts and North Somerset Association, to preach their annual sermon, I left Taunton for Bristol, March 22nd, and arrived there in the evening. The next day proceeded to Frenchay. The next morning preached the Association sermon, to a large congregation, especially considering the unfavourable state of the weather. After the devotional service and the business of the meeting were concluded, the company retired to an inn, two miles distant, sat down to a good plain dinner, in number about sixty-two, and spent the afternoon in a highly pleasing and profitable manner. The next morning travelled to Bath, and in company with a worthy and zealous young friend walked to Marshfield, a small town in Gloucestershire, where there is a tolerably good old meeting-house with a small endowment, both of which would have fallen into the hands of the Independents (who seem to make a merit of depriving us of our places of worship) but for the commendable zeal and perseverance of two resident ladies, in conjunction with the Committee of the Wilts and North Somerset Association. This, with other instances, demonstrates the vast utility of provincial Associations and active Committees. Sunday 26th, preached twice here to very small congregations. The interest at Marshfield is at present very low; but the zeal and prudence of the friends and Committee, will, by the blessing of God, infuse new life. Tuesday 28th, proceeded to Calne, in Wiltshire, once the residence of the venerable Dr. Priestley, and preached there the next evening to a tolerable company. Here also, the interest is very low, but with a fair prospect of being revived, if the friends there do but heartily co-operate with their Association, which, it is to be

hoped, they will see both their duty and interest. Friday travelled to Trowbridge, and on the following Sunday morning, April 2nd, preached at Bradford, (three miles from the above,) to a small company; and in the afternoon and evening at Trowbridge, to rather large congregations. Here the aged, but indefatigable R. Wright labours, walking six miles and preaching three times every Sunday. His settlement in the west is of considerable importance to our great and good cause, and should his life and health be preserved, and that they may be, and for many years to come, should be, and I trust is, the earnest wish and prayer of every real friend to the extension of the knowledge of evangelical truth, his abode in that part of the kingdom will, under the Divine blessing, be attended with still more pleasing and beneficial results. Friday 7th, travelled to Frenchay, in the vicinity of Bristol, and preached there twice the next Sunday to a small and attentive congregation. This very pleasant neighbourhood, appears to me, after visiting it several times, a very desirable spot for Missionary exertions, it being situated within one and two miles of several populous villages.

Tuesday 11th, travelled in company with the zealous secretary of the Wilts and North Somerset Association, to Thornbury, in Gloucestershire. Here existed for many years a Presbyterian interest, and, judging from the last minister, Antitrinitarian. But the meeting-house, with an endowment by no means inconsiderable, has fallen into the hands of the Independents. Wednesday went with a friend to Rangeworthy, a pleasant village about four miles from the above, for the purpose of visiting an old and liberal-minded minister, who from his knowledge of Thornbury, and friendship of the late Presbyterian minister, could, no doubt, have furnished me with much valuable information, but he was from home, and not expected back again for a day or two. Being denied the pleasure of seeing the good old man, I left a few tracts for his perusal. Thursday 13th, returned to Frenchay, and spent the next Sunday with the friends of that place. Tuesday 18th, proceeded to Bath, joined Messrs. Howse and Martin, and the next day travelled to Nailsworth, a populous manufacturing district about two miles from Stroud. On our arrival there, we immediately set about getting a room to preach in, which after much inquiry, and no inconsiderable trouble, we at length procured. This object obtained, no time was lost in making our intention to preach, the next evening, as public as possible; we did this by first retiring to our inn and filling up the notice papers, then we divided the neighbourhood into three parts, and the next morning repaired to our respective stations, and distributed the notices. Thursday evening 20th, I had the honour of preaching the first Unitarian sermon in this part of the county, to a large and attentive congregation, to whom we gave a number of tracts, which were gladly received. Friday evening, my excellent young friend, S.

286 *Intelligence.—North Eastern Unitarian Association.*

Martin, late Missionary in Cornwall, preached to a larger company than the preceding, on which occasion we again distributed tracts. Perceiving such a desire to hear, such a willingness to attend, it was determined, agreeably to a previous arrangement, that I should continue there over Sunday, and it was immediately announced that there would be preaching Sunday morning and evening. Sunday morning 23rd, about forty assembled, notwithstanding the church and chapels were open at the same time. In the evening the place was filled almost to suffocation, besides a considerable number who could not get in. I never in my life saw any people behave better, or listen with more attention, not excepting even those around the door and windows. When about to give away the tracts, such was the eagerness to obtain them, that they had well nigh overturned my pulpit, consisting of an old table. Several inquiries were made as to when we should come again.

From all I have been able to observe, and I have seen much to gratify me, not the least of which is an instructed population, young and old, so far as I could discover, being able to read, this part of the country presents an admirable field for Unitarian Missionary exertions; and the Committee of the Wilts and North Somerset Association, whom it more immediately concerns, will do well to direct its principal energies to this spot. Tuesday 25th, returned to Bath and met the Committee, where arrangements were made, in consequence of my report, for regularly supplying Nailsworth with preachers.

Wednesday, proceeded to Marshfield in company with Mr. Martin, who is now minister of the place, and in the evening preached to about fifty persons. The cause here appears gradually improving, and will no doubt continue to improve, if the piety and zeal of the friends do but keep pace with the prudent management of their worthy young Minister and the Committee at Bath. Sunday 30th, preached at Frenchay in the morning, and at Bristol for Dr. Carpenter in the evening. Here my engagement with the Dorset and Somerset Association ended, and, their funds not allowing them to renew it, I proceeded on Monday to Taunton, and after taking leave of my friends, returned home, where I arrived safely on Saturday evening, after an absence of six months.

North Eastern Unitarian Association.

THE *North Eastern Association of Unitarian Christians* was holden at *Lynn*, on Thursday, the 29th of June, and was respectably attended by ministers and friends from the congregations in connexion. Mr. Edward Tagart, of the Octagon Chapel, Norwich, preached an excellent and appropriate discourse, in the morning, from Gal. v. 1, after which the business of the

Association was transacted. The ministers and friends, to the number of between 60 and 70, male and female, then dined together at the Crown Tavern.

Mr. W. Selby, minister of the Chapel at Lynn, was invited to the chair, and the afternoon was passed in great Christian harmony. In the evening, Mr. Tagart again preached from 2 Tim. i. 7. The friends in this district thinking it adds much to the pleasure to finish the day in each other's society, supped together at the place of the dinner, in number equal to that which had dined. The chair was taken by Mr. Tagart, who, with other individuals, enlivened the company with many animated addresses and exhortations. In an especial manner was this seen and experienced when the chairman introduced the great subject of Catholic Emancipation. With this almost every heart seemed to beat in unison, and every tongue to respond in wishes for its speedy accomplishment. This, and the other subjects of address, were calculated to excite zeal and constancy in the profession and support of Unitarian Christianity, believed, as it is by its friends, to be the truth as it is in Jesus, as well as most certainly by all who properly embrace it, a doctrine according to godliness; and impressively were its defenders exhorted to be careful on every occasion to act consistently with their profession of such principles of purity and truth.

The spirit of the meeting was kept up till the company separated; nor is it too much to say from the countenances and expressions of most, that no small portion of enjoyment had been experienced, and, let us hope, edification and additional strength in the faith of the gospel, been also received.

W. STANGER, Secretary.

Lynn, July 19, 1826.

Lancashire and Cheshire Provincial Meeting.

On Thursday, June 22, the Annual Meeting of the ministers and others of the Unitarian Christian profession was held at the Chapel, in Mosley Street, Manchester. The Rev. — Ashton, of Knutsford, led the devotional part of the service, and the Rev. W. Tate, of Chorley, preached the sermon. The text, Matt. xxvii. 8, "Be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." The design of the preacher was to shew and enforce the principles of dissent, and particularly of Unitarian dissent. The ministers and friends dined together to the number of forty-five to fifty.

On the removal of the cloth a series of resolutions were submitted to the consideration of the meeting and adopted. The general tendency of these resolutions was to promote a closer union and a more effective co-operation among the Unitarians of the two counties, and to make the Provincial Meeting the medium of such union and co-operation. The old name of

Provincial Meeting of Presbyterian Unitarian Ministers is to be retained; but objects of more extended usefulness are to engage their attention. The Tract Societies of Liverpool and Manchester, and the Missionary Society, are to be invited to communicate the most remarkable features of their reports to the Provincial Meeting, and the meeting is to consider those means which seem best fitted to promote the interests of these societies. Other objects also contemplated to form a part of the business are, to ascertain the actual progress and real state of Unitarianism in the two counties—the number of children educated in the various schools belonging to Unitarians—and the real state of their different congregations. It is also intended that the Provincial shall be united to the British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

OBITUARY.

ON Friday morning, June 23, 1826, at the house of Mr. Thomas Brewin, Hales Owen, Mr. JOHN TAYLOR, of *Norwich*, aged 76. The immediate cause of his death was a fall from a gig, while descending the hill which passes the residence of that gentleman. There, though a stranger, he was received and nursed with the most anxious solicitude, and with the kindest sympathy. Some hopes of his recovery were at one time entertained; but it pleased Him “in whose hands our breath is,” and whose are all our days,” to disappoint those hopes and to take him to himself. Mr. Taylor was a grandson of Dr. John Taylor, of *Norwich*. His maternal ancestors had for more than two centuries been resident in that city, and had been repeatedly called to fill the highest offices in it. That he discharged the duties of a good citizen, all who knew him (and there were few in his native city to whom his character was not known) will testify. Firmly attached to the principles of civil and religious liberty, he gave them his active, zealous, and consistent support; but his mind was not formed to feel the bitterness of party spirit, and from his warmest political opponents (enemies he could have none) he commanded both respect and friendship. Age had not abated the vigour of his mind; and though he had withdrawn from the cares of business, he was constantly occupied in promoting, by public exertion or by private assistance, the welfare of others. His death, even at his advanced age, has thus left a gap which will not easily be filled up. But he has shewn his survivors how their duties to God and to their neighbour should be performed; how the most ardent piety may subsist with the most active benevolence; how firmness of principle may be blended with sweetness of temper; how cheerfulness may exist without levity; how cultivation of mind may be added to the character of a man of business. May the blessing of such an example not have been bestowed in vain!

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[Vol. XII.]

Reflections on the Goodness of God.

THE goodness of God is no other than his disposition to promote the well-being of his creatures; this disposition we ascribe to him in that absolute perfection which appertains to his nature as absolutely perfect in every point of view. The system of nature presents to us immense numbers and great varieties of sentient beings; they have all strong propensities and corresponding powers for the pursuit and attainment of the objects which are conducive to their well-being; and they all, in different degrees, actually partake of the blessings of existence. As the more perfect orders of creatures are susceptible of the most varied and the highest degrees of enjoyment, they occupy by much the largest and fairest portions of the earth, and render the inferior kinds, and almost all the principal productions of nature, subservient to their authority and conducive to their use. Man is placed at the head of the habitable globe, and is distinguished by a capacity of *continually rising* in the scale of intellect and enjoyment, and, with these advances, of producing a corresponding favourable influence on the well-being of the inferior animals, as well as of rendering both them and the inanimate creation subservient to his increasing excellence and happiness. If we compare man in his most defective condition, a wild wanderer in the desert, to man in a highly civilized state, with all nature subjected and, as it were, sympathizing in his acquisitions and enjoyments, we may form some idea of that advancing progression by which the Creator is continually carrying forward the great work of promoting the well-being of his creation. How numerous are the arts of civilized society! How conducive to the sustenance, improvement and enjoyment of life! They are all obtained gradually as the result of that growing capacity with which God has endowed his creature man. The manner in which both animate and inanimate nature concurs with his industry and improvements, and flourishes under his cherishing hand, is deserving of the highest admiration. The wild, unproductive desert is con-

verted into a land of fertility and luxuriance, as the result of his industry. The ferocious and noxious creatures with which it was infested, either disappear or are tamed to his uses; while the more docile and useful kinds increase in numbers, in beauty and usefulness. His will becomes the law of their actions, and in yielding obedience to it, they, in the general, experience a great accession to their own enjoyments. The resources of his ingenuity in converting the rude materials of nature to his various purposes, are wonderful even in his own eyes; nevertheless they are as nothing compared with what is effected by the co-operating energies of the Creator. If the desert is seen to smile on the industry of the agriculturist, it is because the germinating power of the Almighty crowns his labours with rich and abundant blessings. If the husbandman selects the useful seeds and plants, and prepares the earth for their reception, it is God who expands them into trees and fruits and flowers, and renders the single grain the source of manifold increase. It is *his* fashioning hand which, concurring with the attentions of man, adapts the several orders of domestic animals to his wants, wishes and inclinations. Thus the Creator is seen continually conferring blessings on all the varied exertions of human intellect and industry, and promoting the advancing enjoyments of man, and those also of the inferior animals, with his advancing capacities to receive and communicate them. This tendency to progressive improvement may be said to mark the great plan, the comprehensive outline, of the Divine proceedings, by which the scale of excellence and happiness is in the most effectual manner extending, and, in my apprehension, is a decisive proof of the infinite goodness of God.

If we turn our attention to the natural relationships which are established between creatures of the same species, we perceive that they are admirably adapted for the maintenance of their mutual well-being. In all the orders of animals in which we have opportunities of observing it, the ardent affection of parents towards their offspring is conspicuous. It is a principle of sympathy or benevolence which, in the ardour of its solitudes, is often found to equal, if not exceed, the strongest impulses of self-love. It is the source of the most amiable emotions, and of the most useful and energetic exertions. Not only are the *tender offspring* thus preserved and cherished, but the pa-

rent in whose breast such excellent affections predominate, and whose every faculty is thus excited to such kind and arduous exertions, is by this principle greatly elevated in the scale of being and happiness. These affections, while they have for their object the well-being of those young and lively creatures which are unable to sustain themselves, but are thus rendered healthy and joyous, are at the same time sources of exquisite enjoyment to the breasts which they animate. The feelings of sympathy and goodness are those of the purest happiness. We see with amazement their operation in raising the intellects and refining the passions of the four-footed and feathered tribes. We witness with delight their influence on human life in almost every state of society. It is so predominant in all societies, that a departure from it is marked with odium, as a violation of one of nature's strongest laws. We may see in an affection which continually draws forth the milk of human kindness, which exalts every faculty and nerves every action, not only a proof, but a lively emblem, of that parental benevolence which superintends the whole system of animated being. And with the same manifest reason that we exclaim, "He that fashioned the eye, shall he not see?" we may add, "He that inspires each parent with affection toward his offspring, that lights the eye with sympathy, and actuates the life with ardent usefulness, is not he the fountain of beneficent affections, of active goodness?"

Besides the provision which is thus made for the sustenance and enjoyment of every creature in the young and helpless state, by which it is left free to expand its faculties and receive pleasure in the first stages of its existence, we might instance the obligations which each human being is under to the society and attentions of others for those various attainments by which he is enabled to recommend himself to notice, to forward his own improvement, to obtain a maintenance, and to contribute to the general benefit; as also the advantages he enjoys from the constant concurrence of his fellow-creatures for almost all that he can effect or obtain. By the combined skill and industry of various artizans, the agriculturist is furnished with the implements necessary to till and dress his ground. It is by mutual exchange that the several classes of society are furnished both with the various necessities and blessings of life, and with the means by which they are procured.

Thus mankind are united by an almost infinite number of links, either essential to the subsistence or conducive to the enjoyment of each individual. While this should engage their mutual good-will and benevolence, it should raise their common gratitude to that Providence which has so admirably entwined their destinies, and rendered them so productive of reciprocal benefits.—We might moreover notice the various advantages which every observant person may remark in the incidental circumstances of his life; some of them he must feel to have been greatly advantageous, and others, though attended with pain and disappointment in the first instance, yet are afterwards, perhaps, productive of some of the best influences on his temper and character, being in the number of those kind chastenings of our heavenly Father by which the heart is made better; and though under the immediate pressure of evil the ultimate beneficial tendency may be far from apparent, yet to the more cool reflections of after-times it may often be rendered evident; and well-disposed minds will in general discern upon the whole a great preponderance in the beneficial over the unfavourable incidents attendant on their lives. Though they are merely *incidental* as it respects ourselves, they are all *appointed* by our Creator, without whose superintendence *not a sparrow falleth to the ground*, and should therefore call forth the lively emotions of gratitude and the softened feelings of resignation, from the conviction that, whether felt as benefits by us or not at the present moment, they are really ordered for the best, and that the few instances in which we perceive it not, assume this appearance through the imperfections of our judgment, and indicate no deficiency in the goodness of God—that God, whose breath animates, whose sun warms and illumines, and whose intellectual ray informs and exalts us!

But we hasten to remark his goodness in the Christian revelation, which *brings life and immortality to light*. Can imagination form an idea of a greater instance even of divine beneficence than that manifested in the predicted transformation of this mortal existence into a state in which there will be no more death, and from whence every evil attendant upon mortality will be absolutely removed?—a state in which, provided there is a suitable preparation for it in this, by a moderate use and grateful return for its blessings, there will be *fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore*! This felicity it proposes to accomplish through the

only effectual means; the correction of our errors, the amelioration of our hearts, the general improvement of our minds. The Christian revelation was not consequent to the prevalence of virtue in mankind; it did not proceed from the favour of God to his *obedient* children. No; it arose from his compassion to a world so deeply immersed in error and sin, that nothing short of such a supernatural communication of his will could dispel their mental darkness, and recall them to a state of penitence and amendment. Powerful was its influence, by the evidence of its miracles, the purity of its doctrine, and the weight of its sanctions; in converting the Gentiles from insane, lewd and cruel idolatries, to the knowledge and worship of the one true God—from vices most debasing to humanity, to the virtues of men and of Christians. “The most turbulent and vindictive spirits,” observes one of its early converts and martyrs, “were transformed into quite another nature, meek and gentle as the lamb. The amiable manners, the cogent arguments, the steadfast fortitude, the unwearied perseverance, and the patient sufferings of its professors, wrought so favourably on its determined enemies, that they gradually dropped their resistance, relinquished their bloody persecutions, and at length came over to its standard. With this reformation in religion, morals and manners, civil institutions participated; those murderous combats which Paganism sanctioned for popular amusement, were abolished by royal authority, and all those vile and criminal practices which were the attendants of Heathen worship, and arose immediately out of the vices it created, in a great measure ceased with it. Slavery was gradually abolished in Europe through the influence of Christianity, and the rigid aspect of war considerably relaxed its features. Science, learning and right reason, in all their more useful applications, are much indebted to the illuminating, the animating and benign influences which the Christian revelation sheds in every direction.” But if such are the beneficial effects of the mere *revelation* or *dislosure* of the gracious purposes of God, what will the *realisation* of them be but “*life from the dead*,” in a moral as well as in its literal and proper sense? If the *glad-tidings* of immortality awakened so many gross idolators from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, what shall *immortality itself* effect but a far more complete deliverance from error and vice? When both these objects are accomplished, and sin and

294 *Letter of Ex-President Adams's on Intemperance.*

death are cast into the lake of destruction, what will remain but life *without* death, virtue *without* impurity? The felicity which will result from this state of things must vastly exceed what *eye hath yet seen, ear hath heard, or hath entered into the mind of man.* In these circumstances, indeed, the votaries of vice will lose all the favourite objects of their vicious gratifications; virtue alone will receive its pure enjoyments. The proud will suffer a most humiliating debasement, and the humble as glorious an elevation. Those in whom each genuine virtue has taken root *here*, will *there* unfold their richest foliage, and yield their best fruition, while each weed of vice must wither and disappear. Then will the infinite benevolence of God shine forth in unclouded splendour, and bring its gracious purposes to their full accomplishment.

E. S.

Letter of the late venerable Ex-President Adams's on Intemperance.

WE hear that the patriotic and virtuous JOHN ADAMS, formerly President of the United States of America, and one of the enlightened and intrepid band that drew up the Declaration of Independence, died by a singular coincidence on the 4th of July, the day of the celebration of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, and in fact the Jubilee or 50th Celebration. [By another still more remarkable coincidence, the venerable Ex-President JEFFERSON died, it is reported, the same day.] Every writing of his appears now to be valuable, and we extract, in order to preserve on our pages, the following letter lately made known to the American public in a periodical directed against the habit of intemperance. The letter from "the Sage of Quincy," as Mr. Adams is denominated by the American Editor from his residence, was occasioned by a communication from a society having the same laudable object.

"DEAR SIR,

Quincy, Feb. 21st, 1819.

"I THANK you for your address to the New Bedford auxiliary society for the suppression of intemperance, which I have read with pleasure and edification; it is elegant and pathetic; it is pious and virtuous; it addresses itself to the understanding and the heart.

"A drunkard is the most selfish being in the universe. He has no sense of modesty, shame or disgrace. He has

no sense of duty, or sympathy of affection with his father or mother, his brother or sister, his friend or neighbour, his wife or children; no reverence to his God; no sense of futurity in this world or the other—all is swallowed up in the mad, selfish joy of the moment.

“Is it not humiliating, that Mahometans and Hindoos should put to shame the whole Christian world by their superior examples of temperance?

“Is it not degrading to Englishmen and Americans, that they are so infinitely exceeded by the French in this cardinal virtue? And is it not mortifying beyond all expression, that we Americans should exceed all other eight millions of people on the globe, as I verily believe we do, in this degrading, beastly vice of intemperance?

“I am, Sir, your obliged friend and humble servant,
“JOHN ADAMS.”

The Curse of Disobedience.

[From “Devotional Verses.” By Bernard Barton. 12mo. 1826.]

“And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron.” *Deut. xxviii. 23.*

APPALLING doom! yet hearts there are
Its fearful truth have found,
Have known a heaven where sun nor star
Its radiance sheds around.

A heaven of brass from whose stern cope
No living waters welled,
Whereon the rainbow, arch of hope,
The eye hath ne’er beheld.

An earth of iron whose barren breast
Seemed icy, cold and dead,
Where sterile paths, by joy unblest,
In endless maze were spread.

Oh! such a heaven and such an earth
Are no delusive dream,
To which wild phantasy gives birth,
Howe’er the worldling deem.

They who have trod that hopeless path,
Beneath that rayless sky,
Have known the hour of righteous wrath
These metaphors imply.

These know how God's most holy will
 Can mar creation's face,
 And leave the disobedient still
 No pleasant resting-place.

One only hope for such remains—
 Repent, return and live;
 He who no penitent disdains,
 New heavens, new earth can give.

Simple obedience shall restore
 Green fields and sunny skies,
 And hearkening to his voice bring more
 Than Eden's paradise.



*Mr. Worsley on Lay Preaching : with an Account of a
 Tribute of Gratitude and Respect to Mr. S. Gibbs, from
 the Congregation at Devonport.*

Plymouth, June 12, 1826.

THE distinctive mark of the Independents and Presbyterians in the Church History of England, at one period was this—that the latter would not admit into the number of its ordained ministers any persons who had not been educated with a view to the pulpit; whereas the former were not so particular on this head, but freely admitted among the number of its preachers any persons who rendered themselves acceptable to their congregations by good natural parts and a facility in public speaking. This distinction has long ceased. Both these classes had shewn their contempt of what was called *holy orders*, and soon they learned to respect *pretended holy orders* as little: they may well be all given together to the winds. Yet the Independents have been of late much more guarded as to the qualifications of their ministers; while the old Presbyterian societies, which are now for the most part become Unitarian, have had the advantage of ministers educated under the respectable names of Kippis and Rees, Enfield and Barnes, Ashworth, Robins and Belsham; and, more recently still, of those gentlemen who are at the head of the York College, and are now sending out young men eminently qualified to supply in our larger and wealthy congregations the places of their fathers as they retire off the stage; many of whom, there is reason to believe, will be able champions and zealous friends of the pure doctrine

of the gospel when the present race of ministers is no more.

But so much has the number of our societies increased within the last twenty years, that it would not have been possible to provide them with ministers educated with a view to supply them; and many must have wanted instructors, had we not obtained useful auxiliaries from the Methodist and Calvinist connexions, who have fallen into Unitarian views and joined our ranks.

By another means we have been greatly assisted. Lay gentlemen, as the pride of Churchmen has called them, have in many places kindly undertaken to conduct our public worship; and so great have been the facilities they have obtained in this labour of love, from the numerous publications which have been recently sent into the world, that in many instances no want of a regular minister has been experienced, and societies have been upheld and have flourished under the generous care and zealous exertions of these unclerical men.

This is a circumstance that has ever afforded me the greatest pleasure. When we look back upon the early history of the church, and see that before the establishment of the celebrated college of Alexandria, the preachers of Christianity were for the most part unlearned men, that the Christian world at large was, in the second century, "reproached for its illiteracy," (see Robinson's Ecclesiastical History,) and that it was through the instrumentality of this very school, that the corruptions of Christianity crept in; when I read that it was the unlearned many in the church that long resisted the urgent pleas of the schoolmen to admit their mystical divinity, that they "loudly cried out for the monarchy," that they charged it home upon the philosophical Christians, "that they were for worshipping two and even three Gods, while themselves acknowledged but one God, the Father, the Monarch;" when I consider the extreme simplicity of the gospel as it appears in the evangelical history, and that it was this simple doctrine that *the common people heard gladly*,—I am inclined to ask, Where, for the purpose of Christian teaching, is the necessity of school-learning; and why may not a man of a good common understanding, if he possess a clearness and freedom of speech, stand up and exhort his brethren in the great truths of the gospel? And how unwise those societies must have been who, be-

cause they could not maintain a regularly-bred minister, have suspended their worship, and suffered their meeting-houses to fall to decay or pass into the hands of other sects—a circumstance which we have seen taking place in many parts of England, but which, I trust, will not take place any more among that class of Christians to which we belong.

Great encouragement is held out to small societies to employ, for maintaining Unitarian worship, their own abilities, in those instances with which we are acquainted in different parts of the kingdom, of the Unitarian doctrine being in this manner first planted and afterwards cherished by lay preachers, (I use the term purely by way of explanation, for I cordially embrace them as brothers,) until it has grown up into a numerous and respectable church; and still greater encouragement in those cases of individual exertion in which our lay friends have trained themselves to the business of public teaching, and rendered themselves so essentially useful in this good work, that it can scarcely be said a minister is wanting to assist them.

This neighbourhood furnishes a striking instance of the value of such services, and it affords me great pleasure in conveying to the pages of the Reformer the documents which will accompany these remarks, to record the grateful sentiments of the Unitarian Church at Devonport, two miles from this town, towards their intelligent and excellent friend Mr. Silvanus Gibbs, whose name has been often seen in the pages of the Repository and the Reformer, and whose writings have shewn the Unitarian public how well he has merited the token of respect which his hearers have presented to him.

I shall not state the circumstances relative to the formation of the society at Devonport, formerly Dock, which are related in the subjoined papers, but shall add, that, impressed with a sense of the great obligation they lie under to Mr. Gibbs for his unwearied and truly acceptable services, his hearers first thought of imitating the example of our friends at Framlingham and Tenderden, and presenting him with a useful piece of plate. To this, when mentioned to him, he objected, but yielded to the proposal afterwards made to procure for him a copy of Mr. Belsham's Translation and Exposition of the Epistles of Paul, which were directed to be bound in the handsomest man-

ner possible in Russian leather. In order to accomplish this object, a subscription was set on foot among them, the amount of which being found much to exceed the sum required, it was determined to add to this excellent commentary, Kenrick's Exposition of the New Testament : thus furnishing their friend with two valuable sources of information, from which he may draw and supply them with sound critical remarks, the best moral lessons, the most instructive and edifying subjects of contemplation for the disciple of Christ Jesus.

I shall only add my cordial testimony to that of my neighbours, an industrious society, whose dependence is entirely on their weekly gains, most of them being employed in the labours of the Dock-yard, of the value of the services of Mr. Gibbs so long enjoyed by them ; how great a pleasure it affords me to know, that they have justly appreciated the value of those services and given proof of it, and the hope I entertain that other societies similarly circumstanced will not be regardless of the great obligations they lie under to men of activity and of talent, who, without the prospect of any temporal gain, exert themselves in this manner to maintain a drooping cause and keep alive the spark of divine truth.

I. WORSLEY.

On Sunday afternoon last, the society assembled in the large room in which their meetings are held, when Mr. Nicholas Rundell addressed Mr. Gibbs as follows :

“ MR. SILVANUS GIBBS,

“ We are now assembled to present you with Mr. Kenrick's Exposition of the Historical Books of the New Testament, and Mr. Belsham's Translation and Exposition of Paul's Epistles. These works are intended as a small token of our gratitude for your disinterested and very useful labours in this place, and as a testimony of the zeal and unwearied perseverance which you have manifested in disseminating what we believe to be the pure, unsophisticated doctrines of the Scriptures, and in uniformly enforcing their superior tendency to produce virtuous conduct ; as without a corresponding practice the most clear and correct religious notions are of little worth.

“ More than six years have elapsed since a room was opened in this town for public worship on Unitarian Christian principles ; during which period we have happily enjoyed, what we hope ever to esteem an important and invaluable privilege, namely, the means of socially worshipping the One God and Father, as the disciples of the ' one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,' which we could not have otherwise

done without violating conscience, and acting with duplicity in those concerns in which we ought to be most explicit, open and sincere.

“ It is with heart-felt pleasure that we mutually congratulate each other in respect to the improvement which has taken place in the public mind; that the asperity of feeling with which we were formerly regarded, has in a great degree subsided; and that the prejudices which gave rise to it are gradually receding before increasing candour and liberality.

“ We rejoice in the success which has attended your exertions in promoting a belief in the proper unity and infinite benevolence of the Supreme Being, which necessarily tends to inspire unshaken confidence in Him as the Father and the Friend of all, to promote charitable feelings among ourselves, and the most unbounded love towards the great family of mankind.

“ May God, whose highest glory consists in the happiness of his creatures, continue to bless your labours; and, when time shall be no more, may he whom we acknowledge as our only Lord and Master, own you as his faithful servant, and welcome you to a participation in his joy!

“ Accept, Sir, of our united thanks for your services, and we, unanimously, request your acceptance of the before-named books, which now lie on the table.”

Mr. Gibbs's Answer.

“ MY CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,

“ This handsome present with which you have now honoured me, I most cordially and thankfully accept. It will ever be esteemed as a distinguished token of your friendship, and a public approbation of my humble labours in the sacred cause of religious truth and virtue.

“ Through the kindness of Mr. Worsley and Mr. Cooke, I have already perused these works, and can testify to their superior value. For the excellent authors, I have long entertained a high regard, particularly for the enlightened Translator and Expositor of Paul's Epistles, whose masterly pen has been so many years consecrated to the illustration and defence of unadulterated Christianity, and whose admirable writings have essentially contributed to emancipate the gospel from the corruptions which, for ages, have marred its simplicity, shrouded its loveliness, and rendered it ‘ a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence.’

“ In putting these volumes into my possession, it is not of course your intention that they should be preserved merely as an ornament to my library, how much soever that end may be answered by the elegance of the binding; but you have doubtless in view the influence which their invaluable contents ought to have on my mind and future exertions, when they shall have been attentively read and properly digested. Whether the result, in this respect, will be commensurate with your anticipa-

tions, time only can determine; should you, however, in any wise, be disappointed, I trust the fault may be considered rather in the understanding than in the will.

"I assure you, my friends, that I stand in need of every assistance, as well as of your candour and forbearance. Though it has always been my opinion that an academical education is most essential to the Christian ministry, I never perceived the propriety and utility of it so clearly as I have done since my connexion with this society. It is my ardent wish to become better acquainted with the Scriptures, and with all necessary truth; but in consequence of the little leisure I enjoy, and the small portion of time that can be appropriated to theological pursuits, I must necessarily be content with a very circumscribed portion of knowledge. But such as I possess shall be cheerfully devoted to your service, in inculcating and diffusing correct sentiments concerning the being and perfection of God, the person, character, and offices of the Lord Jesus Christ, the nature of gospel salvation, and the beneficial influence and final triumphs of Christianity; which I am anxious to promote according to the best of my ability, as far as the circle of my influence extends. May a larger share of that love of truth and sacred ardour in diffusing it, which so strongly characterized the pious authors of these volumes, be implanted in my bosom; and may the good cause which we have so much at heart widely extend its boundaries, until the earth be filled with its glory, and there shall be only 'One Jehovah, and his name One!'

"As a Christian society, let us continue united. Let every individual be ardent and active in disseminating what he conceives to be the truth as it is in Jesus, by friendly conversation, by lending of books, and by any other honourable means. You have all witnessed the manner in which our peculiar doctrines have been misrepresented, and our motives calumniated by the over-zealous advocates of popular creeds. This conduct was, in a great measure, the offspring of ignorance; but happily the spirit of our opponents is considerably meliorated, in consequence of their having become better acquainted with our principles, and the arguments by which they are supported; and I am persuaded that the purity and sanctity of our cause will be acknowledged in proportion as these are diffused. They solicit only a candid and impartial hearing.

"Those persons who have possessed courage enough to venture into this place, though under the influence of very unfavourable impressions, if not of hostile feelings, have departed in a very different state of mind. Some indeed, who were formerly opponents, have become friends; and this I doubt not would be the case with many others who are deterred from entering our place of worship 'lest the building should fall on their heads,' were they to divest themselves of prejudice and such absurd

apprehensions. But as these persons are thus debarred from *hearing*, let it be your strenuous endeavour to induce them to READ what has been written in defence of the UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE. If they will only examine our works attentively, the result must be beneficial. Our library, which contains upwards of six hundred books and pamphlets, affords ample scope for all your exertions. Our best thanks are due to those friends who have nobly persevered in pushing the works into circulation; and I am solicitous that *every individual* among us should perceive the importance of his situation, and put forth all his energies in the promotion of our cause.

"You have often seen quoted that maxim by the great Lord Bacon, 'KNOWLEDGE IS POWER;' but there is another not less important—'UNION IS STRENGTH.' Let us bear these in mind, and always act accordingly.

"Why has Unitarianism increased so rapidly during the last twenty years, but from the increased activity of its friends? And it is chiefly by *union* and *activity*, under the Divine blessing, that it will become universal. What would be the present state of things had it not pleased Almighty God, in the course of his providence, to raise up that great and good man Dr. PRIESTLEY, whose eminent genius, indefatigable industry, and well-directed zeal, shed a lustre over the world? To him we owe far more than many Unitarians are now willing to acknowledge, who perhaps cannot fully divest themselves of those ill-founded prejudices which they imbibed against him in the days of their orthodoxy. And what would be the present state of things had there been a hundred such characters in the last century? I never hear the name of this venerable man mentioned without mingled emotions of admiration and gratitude. We may be assured that posterity will duly appreciate his superlative talents and virtues.

"It afforded me particular pleasure to see in the Christian Reformer for last March, that the Rev. Edward Burn, of Birmingham, one of the Doctor's most illiberal and virulent opponents about the time of the disgraceful riots in 1791, has at length publicly regretted 'the asperity of feelings and expressions which he used in his controversies with that respectable and highly talented individual.' This is honourable to Mr. Burn's present state of mind. It will afford him consolation in the hour of death; and I am sure he will have Dr. Priestley's forgiveness when they meet in heaven.

"In addition to the increasing liberality of our opponents, one of the best signs of the times is the recent formation of THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION. Those gentlemen who have taken the lead in this important business, are entitled to the gratitude of the whole Unitarian body. May all who have it in their power afford every assistance, and cordially

co-operate with them in all their laudable and benevolent undertakings. If the Association be properly supported, the benefits resulting from it will be incalculable.

"But above all, let us, my friends, manifest our love of truth and attachment to the Gospel, by a *regular* and *serious* attendance on the ordinance of PUBLIC WORSHIP, and by conducting ourselves in the various duties of life as the disciples of him who was a perfect model of virtue and piety.

"This is the best way to ensure both the celebrity and stability of our cause; and it will prove the most effectual method of silencing the opposition of our enemies. Convinced that the present transitory state is introductory to another and a better, which is eternal in the heavens, may we so live and so act as to be enabled to meet the messenger of death without indulging superstitious terror or alarm, and enjoy in our final moments a happy foretaste of those blissful scenes that will be hereafter realized by all the faithful followers of the Saviour.

"I beg to thank the Subscribers generally, and the Committee in particular, for their affectionate liberality, and for the trouble they have taken in this affair. Be assured, my friends, that having proceeded thus far in my labours among you, I shall, through the favour of the Almighty, persevere as long as the very delicate state of my health will permit, and you may consider my exertions useful and expedient.

"It would afford me the purest pleasure to see a neat chapel erected in Devonport, and an able minister settled here; but as this may not be the case for some years, we must do all in our power to supply the deficiency, until that happy event be realized. In the mean time let us cheerfully anticipate brighter days; knowing that TRUTH, which is mighty, will ultimately prevail over all opposition, and that the knowledge of the ONE UNDIVIDED and ETERNAL JEHOVAH shall be extended from pole to pole."

Within the cover of each volume are printed in gold letters these words:

"Presented to Mr. Silvanus Gibbs, by the Unitarian Christian Church, Devonport, as a testimony of their gratitude for his highly valued and gratuitous services."

Bigotry of New Baptist Magazine.

SIR,

Honiton, July 15, 1826.

BELIEVING it to be a duty incumbent on every one, and particularly the young, to examine the various opinions on the Christian faith, I am frequently induced to peruse some of the most popular Calvinistic publications. An article in the New Baptist Magazine for June, has

recently attracted my notice, and the same motive that impels me to elucidate truth, urges the exposure of what I think to be error. We have lately seen too many lamentable instances of bigotry and intolerance to be surprised at any angry ebullition of feeling from a class of Christians who often forget what manner of spirit they are of; many of their attempts have met with the disapprobation they deserved, while others have been treated with silent contempt.

The remarks I refer to, are contained in a review of Professor Stuart's Letters to the Rev. Dr. Channing, in reply to his Sermon on the Evidences of Christianity. Alluding to the Unitarians, it is stated, "that they have never felt the need of an atoning Saviour, and are rather desirous of finding they do not need one, and that Christ is not equal to such an undertaking." "We greatly fear that the opponents of the Deity of Christ are not remarkable for their humility or their piety; they seem to be distinguished from others by disbelieving rather than by their faith, and are found to assimilate more to the Deist than to the man whose humble dependence for salvation is placed on what he conceives to be the foundation which Jehovah has laid in Zion." "Within the last few years there has been a very striking alteration in the conduct of the Socinians, or, as they would term themselves, Unitarians: we cannot say that they have increased in piety, or in a regard to the great truths of Revelation, but we do give them great credit for their increasing honesty; we do not of course mean in their giving up the chapels they so improperly and dishonourably hold, but we mean that they declare their sentiments more boldly than formerly. They do not, as they formerly did, *mince the matter*; they no longer 'mutter,' but they speak out, and we thank them for it; men now know what they mean, and if they have any regard to the word of God, if they have the least sense of what the religion needs to conduct them to heaven, they cannot be deceived by the pretensions of Unitarianism."

I need not fill up your columns with a refutation of the above; every one who reads it must, however, be convinced what are the pretensions of Calvinism, and candidly acknowledge the "humility and piety" that actuates the followers of that system, which hurls into eternal anguish all who dare to exercise the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free. Does this pious and honourable reviewer "regard the great truths of Revelation," when he asserts

that, "he who rejects the atonement of Christ secures his own ruin"? The language of scripture is, "In every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Does he bear in mind the declaration of the Apostle, that *charity* is the most exalted virtue, that it is even superior to *faith*? And while denying the Christian name to his brethren, does he remember the words of our Saviour, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you"? In drawing the attention of your readers to the above extracts, my object is not so much to expose the groundless calumnies they contain, for the sting which the detracter meant to inflict will recoil with redoubled force on his own bosom; but I would rather urge it as a stimulus to the friends of truth to redouble their exertions in maintaining the superiority of their faith over such gloomy and illiberal tenets as these. Unitarianism is built upon too strong a foundation to be shaken by such mean and unworthy artifices. The "deluded Socinian" may perhaps for a little while be dispirited by opposition, obloquy, and misrepresentation, but he will not suffer his disappointed feelings to get the better of an ardent desire to promote the best interests of mankind. He remembers with joy and gratitude the animating promise, "that Jehovah shall be one, and his name one," and hails the coming of that glorious period when the prophetic declarations of the Most High shall be fulfilled. Sincerely hoping that our friends will no longer *mutter* about these glorious and important truths, but *boldly* proclaim them to the world, I remain, &c.

J. M.

Christian Superstition rebuked by Indians.

(From Humboldt's Travels in South America, Vol. V. p. 273.)

"THE Indians of the forest, when they visit occasionally the missions, conceive with difficulty the idea of a temple or an image. 'These good people,' said the missionary, 'like only processions in the open air. When I last celebrated the patron-festival of my village, that of San Antonio, the Indians of Inirida were present at mass. *Your God*, said they to me, *keeps himself shut up in a house, as if he were old and infirm; ours is in the forest, in the fields, and on the mountains of Sipapa, whence the rains come.*'"

Books for Children: a Letter to the Secretary of Unitarian Association.

SIR,

Dover, July 27, 1826.

By inserting the following letter in the *Christian Reformer*, you will much oblige the

TEACHERS OF THE UNITARIAN BAPTIST SUNDAY-SCHOOLS IN DOVER AND CANTERBURY.

To the Secretary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

SIR,

At the anniversary of the Dover and Canterbury Sunday-school Union, it was resolved, that a letter should be addressed to the Secretary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, submitting to him the propriety of turning his attention to the adoption of some efficient plan for providing our Sunday-schools with suitable books, particularly something of a periodical nature.

Agreeably to this resolution, I have undertaken to address you on the subject.

Several communications have, at different times, appeared in the pages of the *Reformer*, complaining of the want of books suitable to the children of our schools; but nothing effective has yet been accomplished. This is certainly to be lamented, because whilst the children of the schools of other denominations are plentifully supplied with books, inculcating their peculiar sentiments, whilst there are many arduous and successful attempts to spread the cause of Unitarianism in other ways, the children of our schools are, with such books, left unprovided; and if they obtain periodical works of a religious nature at all, must imbibe sentiments which, to say the least, we consider are not in the highest degree honourable to God or beneficial to man.

In the nineteenth century, Sir, in an age like this too, the evil calls aloud for remedy; and whether a corrupt or a pure Christianity shall influence thousands of the next generation, must, it should seem, depend on the attention which is paid to this subject.

With your talents, Sir, or with your zeal and influence, we conceive that a little exertion would put in motion those springs which would diffuse the most invaluable blessings to the rising generation; being the means of their receiving, in its purest state, the rich inheritance of the gospel of the grace of God.

From the frequent calls of this nature, there appears no doubt, but that the Unitarian public would readily engage to purchase such works, or to enter into any reasonable plan that might be proposed to attain the object. I am, &c.

G. W. COOKE,

Secretary to the Union.

[The plan of a cheap Periodical for Schools is under consideration: any hints with regard to it before the End of the Year, will be esteemed a favour. Ed.]

Letter of Mr. Roscoe's to the Promoters of the Liverpool Anti-Slavery Meeting.

[NOTHING can shew more plainly the triumph of right feelings on the subject of Negro-Slavery, than the issuing of a petition for its ultimate abolition from Liverpool, agreed upon at a public, numerous, and most respectable meeting, and signed by a great number of hands. The proceedings at this meeting, where Mr. James Cropper was in the Chair, were very interesting; and not the least interesting part of them was the reading of the following letter from Mr. Roscoe, the venerable writer, philanthropist and Christian Reformer, which we have great pleasure in transplanting to our pages.]

To Messrs William Rathbone, Adam Hodgson, and John Cropper.

GENTLEMEN,

Lodge-lane, April 24, 1826.

I greatly regret that the present state of my health prevents my attending the public meeting intended to be held this day, for considering the expediency of petitioning Parliament for the abolition of slavery in the British Colonies; but although I am deprived of the opportunity of taking a part in its deliberations, I cannot refrain from expressing the pleasure I feel that such meeting has at length taken place, and my sincere wishes that it may forward the great cause which, for more than half a century, has been an object the nearest to my heart.

That the present meeting has been prematurely or hastily called, can scarcely be asserted. On the contrary, it must have been thought extraordinary in other parts of the kingdom, that this great and flourishing town has not sooner expressed its public sentiments on this subject; and it may perhaps have been supposed, that some leaven of ancient

abuses still remains amongst us; but I trust the proceedings of this day will shew that such suspicions are groundless; and that the town of Liverpool is not less awake to the voice of justice, and the claims of humanity, than any other portion of the British empire.

It is, indeed, difficult to conceive how any person who breathes the air of freedom, partakes of the bounties of Providence, and of all the pleasures of domestic and social life, can suppose himself entitled to these blessings, or reconcile it to his feelings to enjoy them, whilst he is conscious that so many of his fellow-beings, sensible like himself to every emotion of pleasure and pain, are languishing in the most abject slavery, subject to the tyranny and caprice of those who have no other object in view than to reduce them to the condition of beasts of labour, and whose posterity are, by a cruel anticipation, devoted to the same wretched condition as themselves. This, one would think, was a cause which would awaken the most insensible, and rouse the most indolent, even if he had no share in bringing on the evil himself. But what, then, shall we say when we reflect, that we are ourselves the authors of this most enormous abuse; that we, the people of these realms, have given rise to it; that we have supported it for centuries; and that we still continue to maintain it in its full extent and iniquity? Still more extraordinary is it that our crime is gratuitous, that we manifest our folly no less than our injustice, that we actually tax ourselves in order to entail misery on others, and support, by an annual contribution to a large amount, a system of slavery, which the same amount would, if applied to promote the ends of justice and mercy, tend in a great degree to remove. For the manifestation of this great and incontrovertible truth we are chiefly indebted to one of our distinguished townsmen, who has placed it in so clear a point of view, that it is from henceforth impossible that any person who entertains a sense of right and wrong, can feel himself at rest until the guilt of participating in such an enormous crime be effectually removed. It is to no purpose that we pretend to condemn our fellow-subjects, the colonial planters, and proprietors, upon whom, through a variety of causes, the distribution of our cruelties, the infliction of our punishments, has devolved. It is we who have delivered over to them the objects of their oppression; it is we who guarantee them in the exercise of it; it is we who supply them

with the means of it; and the moment we withdraw those supplies the evil must cease. But although the removal of this acknowledged evil be our evident and indispensable duty, it is not the whole of our duty; we must not remedy one act of injustice by the perpetration of another. After having given rise to, and supported for so long a time, a system of slavery, and encouraged our fellow-subjects to devote their labours and embark their property under an assurance of its continuance, we must not suddenly turn round upon them, and consider them as the persons who are to remedy the evil at their own risk and their own expense; much less can we, with any degree of justice, place ourselves in opposition to them, as if they alone were guilty and we were free from offence, or persist in upbraiding them with the exercise of those severities, privations and restraints, which are indispensable to a state of slavery. We must not only insist upon a termination of the evil, but must enable them to accomplish it; and, having so long taxed ourselves for the support of slavery, we must, if it should appear to be necessary, tax ourselves for its extinction, and bear, in common with the colonists, any losses consequent on a change of system. Thus, and thus alone, may we hope to remove from amongst us all causes of dissension and complaint, and to unite every British subject in one great effort for the removal of an evil, of the guilt of which we are at length become sensible, and the consciousness of which we cannot, without violating every principle of reason and justice, any longer support.

I shall only beg leave, on this occasion, further to remark, that upwards of forty years have now elapsed since effectual measures began to be adopted for terminating the trade for slaves to the coast of Africa. I well remember the difficulties with which the subject was then surrounded, and the slender hopes that were entertained that so great an object could ever be accomplished. I remember also, the fears and apprehensions which then existed, that the trade and commerce of the country in general, and of this town in particular, would be greatly injured by the adoption of such a measure. Nearly twenty years have now elapsed since the slave-trade was abolished; and these apprehensions have not only vanished, but the commerce of Liverpool has increased in an unexampled degree. By all just and generous minds the abolition of the slave-trade

was considered as only preparatory to the abolition of slavery itself. Who, that sincerely concurred in that measure, could reconcile himself to the idea of suffering so great a portion of human beings to remain with their posterity in a degrading and hopeless bondage? The period is now arrived when this great effort must be made. The difficulties which oppose it, are not so formidable as those which at first presented themselves to the abolition of the slave-trade. Much has been expected, both in the colonies and at home, towards its accomplishment. Since the prohibition of the importation of slaves into the British plantations, a period of time has elapsed, during which many thousands of those who are now employed in active labour, have risen to maturity. The spirit of the British people is now awakened. The enormity of the evil, both morally and politically, is deeply felt. His Majesty's government is favourable to our views; and although we cannot contend for the immediate abolition of slavery, we must contend for the immediate and effectual adoption of such measures as may, within a reasonable and not distant period, lead to that happy result.

That the meeting of this day may tend to accelerate it, is the most sincere wish of yours, most truly,

(Signed)

W. ROSCOE.

The Messenger Bird.

[From "Forest Sanctuary and other Poems." 8vo. Murray. 1825. Pp. 131—133.]

"Some of the native Brazilians pay great veneration to a certain bird that sings mournfully in the night-time. They say it is the messenger which their deceased friends and relations have sent, and that it brings them news from the other world."—See *Picart's Ceremonies and Religious Customs*.

Thou art come from the spirits' land, thou bird!

Thou art come from the spirits' land!

Through the dark pine grove let thy voice be heard,

And tell of the shadowy band.

We know that the bowers are green and fair

In the light of that summer shore,

And we know that the friends we have lost are there,

They are there and they weep no more!

And we know they have quenched their fever's thirst
From the fountain of Youth ere now,*
For there must the stream in its freshness burst,
Which none may find below.

And we know that they will not be lured to earth,
From the land of deathless flowers,
By the feast or the dance or the song of mirth,
Though their hearts were once with ours.

Though they sat with us by the night fire's blaze,
And bent with us the bow,
And heard the tales of our fathers' days,
Which are told to others now.

But tell us, thou bird of the solemn strain,
Can those who have loved forget ?
We call—and they answer not again—
Do they love—do they love us yet ?

Doth the warrior think of his brother there,
And the father of his child ?
And the chief of those that were wont to share
His wanderings through the wild ?

We call them far through the silent night,
And they speak not from cave or hill ;
We know, thou bird ! that their land is bright,
But say, do they love there still ?

Refutation of American Wesleyan Attacks upon Unitarianism.

WE rejoice to see the Unitarian controversy alive in America and in all parts of the United States. The controversy in any place is we think to be desired ; but there are peculiar reasons for hailing it in the United States of America. One is, that there the state holds out no bribe to induce men to believe or profess a particular creed, and consequently there truth has fair play : and another is, that our American Unitarian brethren seem admirably fitted for the defence of Unitarianism, by their talents, their acquire-

* An expedition was actually undertaken by Juan Ponce de Leon, in the 16th century, with the view of discovering a wonderful fountain, believed by the natives of Puerto Rico to spring in one of the Lucayo Isles, and to possess the virtue of restoring youth to all who bathed in its waters.—See *Robertson's History of America*.

ments, and above all their temper. Such is the impression made upon our minds by reading their tracts and sermons, and we are delighted to contemplate the influence which so many men (yearly increasing) of strong intellect, of sound learning and of enlightened Christian zeal, must in the nature of things have upon a free and of course a thinking people. The controversy that we have now in view is one carrying on at Charleston, South Carolina. An account of it is given in the current number of *Monthly Repository*, where also will be found some excellent passages from an Unitarian advocate. We introduce the notice of it here merely to explain a few interesting remarks that we are about to quote from a pamphlet entitled, "Answer to a New Attack on Unitarians, in the Wesleyan Journal of January 14, 1826." They are, as the reader will perceive, replies to statements and explanations of texts inserted in the "Wesleyan Journal." Those texts and statements will be put in *italics*, at the beginning of the several paragraphs.

We fear that the reader will conclude from this paper that *Wesleyanism* (like Popery, according to the charge of the No-Popery men, whether Wesleyan or Calvinistic or Yorkist), is *always the same*.

"The Editor stigmatizes the doctrines and arguments of Unitarians, as '*profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science, falsely so called, which some professing, have erred concerning the faith.*' But he forgets that this very language can be retorted upon himself, with infinitely more propriety. In the chapter, 1 Tim. vi., from which this quotation is rashly taken, the apostle urges his disciple to adhere 'to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ,' verse 3. Now this is what Unitarians are so earnestly contending ought to be always done. Whereas their opponents, in adopting Athanasian creeds, and the Platonic mysteries which were foisted into the church, by means of the old Alexandrian philosophers, who were half Heathen, and half Christian, have been the real encouragers of profane and vain babblings and oppositions of science, and have erred from the simplicity of the gospel faith. Besides, it is incorrect to say, that Unitarians use oppositions of *science*. The principal 'oppositions' they make to Trinitarian views are *plain texts of Scripture*."

"The Editor asks, when and where have Unitarians been acknowledged Christians, and asserts that the whole

Christian Church disclaims them. This is the remark of *ignorance*. Not to remind the Editor of the fact which he might learn from Ecclesiastical History, that the church was several times almost entirely *Arian*, and that the decrees of the ancient councils which established Trinitarianism, were produced solely by the influence of Popes and Roman Emperors who were more swayed by a spirit of Heathenism than of pure Christianity—I can assure him that throughout New England, there is much greater sympathy between Unitarianism and Orthodoxy, than between Methodists and other denominations. I can remember the time when Methodists were more obnoxious to regular Christians of all denominations than Unitarians are in this city. Forty years ago, according to Dr. Shecut, they were carried to the pumps here and drenched.* There is many a Trinitarian minister in Massachusetts, who exchanges with Unitarians and invites them into his pulpit, who would upon no account be prevailed on to admit a Methodist. I do not say that this partiality is proper; I only give it as an instance of the extremely limited information of the writer before me, who ought to be careful how he sports with matters of fact. He ought not to take the prejudices which happen to prevail in the region around him as specimens of what exists throughout the whole church. Does he not know that in Transylvania, Unitarianism is the established religion in conjunction with the Lutheran, Calvinist, and Roman communions? Does he not know that there are vast numbers of Unitarian churches and pastors in the Lutheran communion throughout Germany, who are acknowledged as Christians? Does he not know that Bishop-Watson, the charming and unanswerable antagonist of Paine, admitted Unitarians to be Christians, and that many other pious and unquestionably sincere dignitaries of the church have accorded them the same charity? It is scarcely two years since Archdeacon Wrangham, himself an able arguer against Unitarians, committed to the press the following truly Christian sentiment. Describing a faithful, anxious, and assiduous shepherd of the English fold, he says, 'he has seen virtuous Unitarians and virtuous Catholics, virtuous Calvinists and virtuous Methodists, and though he neither, with the first, *affirms the Father to be exclusively the proper object of worship,*

* History of Charleston.

not, with the second, prostrates himself before a host of created beings ; though he presumes not, with one class, to contract the capacity of heaven, nor affects, with another, *in simulated or self-deceiving extacies to anticipate its beatitudes*, he trusts that he is guilty of no spurious candour in professing his expectation of seeing them again in that kingdom, whither many shall come from the East, and from the West, and from the North, and from the South.'—*Sermons*, Vol. II. p. 319.

"But further. I cannot admit the justice of the Editor's statement when confined even to his own neighbourhood. Though the recent period at which Unitarian views of the gospel have begun to prevail at the South, and the jealous and unfounded clamour and misrepresentation which have been raised against them, have in many instances prevented Unitarians from the enjoyment of their fair privileges and reputation as Christians, yet I am happy in knowing that this exclusive spirit is by no means universal. I know many instances of pious and serious Trinitarians who cheerfully admit the title of the others as Christians ; and it is scarcely a year since two members of the Unitarian church were welcomed to the communion-table of a Presbyterian minister, who smiled at the suggestion that he *could* be so bigoted as to reject them. I might multiply statements to this effect almost indefinitely. I scarcely recollect a more unguarded sentence than that of the Editor, that 'the whole Christian church disclaims them.'"

"*'The natural man,'* says the Editor, *'receiveth not the things of the spirit of God.'* But Unitarians contend that Trinitarians are *natural men*, as well as themselves; and they are justified, I think, in so contending from the article before me. Unitarians come to their conclusions in the cool, calm, deliberative hours of prayer and examination, in the seclusion of their closets, and over the pages of their Bible. Many Trinitarians have begun to adopt their views under the agitations of terror, and amid the confusion and shrieks of multitudes. I leave it to any man to decide under which circumstances the truth is most likely to be 'spiritually discerned.'"

"*'There is an infinite disparity between human research, and the saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.'* True. But human research must ascertain what the Scriptures say of the Lord Jesus Christ. To run down human re-

search, is the same as to forbid one to crack the shell before he eats the kernel. St. Peter, 2d Epist. chap. vi. ver. 16, suggests, that there is as much danger in being unlearned as learned."

"*'If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.'* Now Unitarians cherish this rule vastly more than their opponents. Their great wish is to adhere to what is *plain and simple*, and what fools and way-faring men can comprehend; whereas Trinitarians wrap up their doctrines in an unintelligible mystery, which it costs infinite ingenuity and learning to explain and comprehend, and even to place in any satisfactory light."

"*'If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God.'* Which party obey this command the most faithfully, those who search the Scriptures independently and prayerfully, with the lights which God has given them, or those who adopt their views from the prescriptions of tyrannical creeds, and follow, like slaves, in the track of human devices?"

"*'No man knoweth the Son but the Father.'* But there are some men who declare that they do know him so well, as to entitle them to condemn all who differ from them."

"*'Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.'* But the Son has absolutely revealed to the world, that the Father is *greater than himself*, and this is what Unitarians humbly believe, but Trinitarians will not believe."

"*'Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.'* What things? Why will this writer pervert the language of scripture? It is not the first time that he has applied it in a most unwarranted manner. Look at Matthew, chap. xii. verse 26, where this sentence occurs. There is not one word there respecting the Trinity, or any of the topics agitated between Unitarians and their opponents. But the generality of his readers would suppose quite the reverse. Is it right to defend one's opinions in this manner? Besides, even allowing the applicability of the quotation at all, it would go entirely against the Editor. For it can be only the plain and simple and intelligible doctrines of the Divine Unity which babes and unlearned men can comprehend, whereas it required all the ingenuity and skill and even violence of the scholastic doctors of the third century, to

force the complicated dogma of the Trinity on the church, where it still holds a loose and precarious footing. There is a very respectable share of unlearned men in all our Unitarian churches. Bishop Magee complains that it is our *want* of learning which prevents us from embracing orthodox views of the atonement. The Wesleyan Journal reproaches us for quite the opposite quality. Between these extremes of censure, we are likely to be kept right."



Letters from the Rev. R. Wright, to the Unitarians in the North-east District.

LETTER V.

Trowbridge, August 3, 1826.

MY CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

IN continuing my remarks respecting the treatment of virtuous Unbelievers who may attend or wish to attend on your public religious services, let me remind you, that you are not to be influenced by any worldly motives or considerations whatsoever; you are to act candidly and impartially towards all, what difference soever there may be in their outward condition and circumstances in life. You are not to suffer your conduct towards Unbelievers to be influenced by a regard to what persons of other religious denominations may say of you, nor to depart from the candid and liberal spirit of the gospel to avoid their reproaches or to gain their approbation. There is reason to fear, that churches, in the treatment of their own members as well as of those whose faith has been questioned, have, in some instances, been influenced by a regard to the opinions which others would form of them and their proceedings, rather than to the precepts of Jesus and his example. In every case you should adhere as strictly as possible to the directions of the great Master and his divinely-commissioned apostles, and where you cannot find a specific direction, be careful to act in his spirit, in the kind and benevolent temper of Christianity, doing every thing in charity, seeking not the praise of men, but the approbation and glory of God.

If Unbelievers choose to attend your places of public worship, you cannot prevent their doing it, nor ought you to prevent them if you had the power. The word of salvation and eternal life held forth among you, is addressed

to them, for it is addressed to all, and it ought to give you pleasure to find them still disposed to hear it. Could you exclude them, your doing it would contribute nothing towards their instruction and conviction; on the contrary, it would be depriving them of the means of instruction and conviction, and surely this cannot be desirable. Their presence in your assemblies neither veils the light of truth, nor weakens its evidences, nor hinders the edification of those who believe. Can you help wishing and praying that they may be brought to the knowledge of the truth, and become real Christians? But if you exclude them from among you, and so far shut them out from the means of being converted to pure and genuine Christianity, are you not counteracting the very thing for which you wish and pray? Our Lord and his apostles excluded none from the assemblies in which they taught publicly, nor from the means of grace and salvation: and what right can you have to do it? Does not the wish to exclude Unbelievers from our public assemblies savour of the leaven of the Pharisees, who said, "Stand by, I am more holy than thou"? Is it not likely to arise from pride, and a dread of the illiberal reflections of the reputed orthodox? I trust, my brethren, there is only one way in which you will endeavour to exclude Unbelievers, that is, by using all possible means to remove their unbelief, and bring them to be Christians.

As you cannot prevent Unbelievers mixing with you in your public assemblies, unless it be by offensive treatment, let me remind you that such treatment would be both dishonourable and injurious. It is an apostolic exhortation, to be gentle towards all men and in meekness to instruct those who oppose themselves. You ought to treat all upright and virtuous persons with respect and kindness, whatever may be their opinions. You have no authority to judge, censure and condemn others for believing either less or more than you do. Their doubts or disbelief cannot justify your withholding from them any of the charities of life, or any part of the respect and friendly treatment to which their integrity and virtue entitle them. Your acting with Pharisaical austerity and self-righteous contumely towards Unbelievers, or treating them with any sort of contempt, disrespect or unkindness, can only tend to shut their minds against conviction, and disaffect them the more against Christianity. If you wish to bring them

to the knowledge of the truth, you must do all you can to excite their attention, conciliate them, and shew them not only the evidence, but also the benignant influence of the gospel in your own spirit and conduct.

Whether Unbelievers can consistently unite in prayers addressed to God in the name of Christ or not, is their inquiry, not ours; their presence neither interrupts nor alters the nature and acceptableness of our devotions: it is for them to judge how far they can unite with us; we have no right to judge for them; and to God alone they are accountable. More than a little depends on what is meant by praying in the name of Christ; I suppose it to mean by his authority, or according to his teaching and example, according to the gospel. It is evident we cannot, while our houses of worship are public, prevent Unbelievers uniting with us in the devotional parts of our services, if they choose to do it; nor can I perceive any right we should have to do it, if we had the power, nor any good purpose our doing it could possibly answer. It is hardly to be thought they would join in such parts of our services if they found nothing interesting in them. Thus it appears, that we neither can nor ought to prevent Unbelievers attending in our public assemblies, to hear the Scriptures read and the word preached, and to join with us in our devotions which are public, if they think it proper to do so, and their doing it should not trouble, as it cannot harm us; it is a matter between themselves and God, to whom alone they are accountable.

But ought we to admit Unbelievers to be members of our churches? This question cannot well be answered without some explanation of the words church and member, (which will be understood differently by different persons,) and also asking some other questions. The word church, in the New Testament, literally means *an assembly*, or a *congregation*, and I am not aware that it has any other meaning. All who regularly attend the public services in any given place, must be included in the congregation or assembly meeting in that place; consequently, by regularly attending, they become members of that congregation or church, whatever any of them may believe or disbelieve. By a church, many persons in the present day mean a select part of the congregation, who are separated and distinguished from the congregation at large, by being baptized, or by partaking of the Lord's Supper, or by some

mark of distinction which separates them from the assembly at large, with whom they ordinarily unite in public worship. Of this distinction between the church and the congregation which regularly meet for religious worship and instruction, I can find no trace in the New Testament: those, however, who admit and act upon it, regard as members of the church none but those who have the peculiar mark or badge, whatever it may be, though perhaps hundreds more may be members of the congregation, by regularly filling their places in it, and contributing towards the support of the minister and the other expenses incurred by regularly meeting together and supporting the cause. Hence, to give a definite answer to the above question, it will be proper to inquire,

1. Ought Unbelievers to be admitted to the Lord's Supper? I do not suppose that any Unbeliever would wish to be admitted either to baptism or the Lord's Supper, unless in an established church, where the latter is made a qualification for some place of worldly honour, power of emolument; I know not that such a case either has occurred or is likely to occur among us. The coming to the Lord's Supper is in fact an expression of faith in Christ, and it is uncharitable and unjust to suppose that a virtuous man who thus expresses his faith is an Unbeliever, when he has no worldly object to gain by it. You have no right as churches to form yourselves into courts of inquisition, and, usurping dominion over the Lord's table, to sit in judgment upon others, and decide whether they be believers or not, before you admit them to his supper. The rule Paul gave is, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of this bread and drink of this cup"—not examine one another, or let every one be examined by the church. The apostle left each person to decide for himself as to his own faith and fitness, and so to partake of the Lord's Supper. Instead of requiring a confession of faith of each person before he comes to the Lord's table, you should regard his coming to that table as declaratory of his faith in Christ. Say an Unbeliever should, inconsistently, partake of the Lord's Supper with you—it is he that is accountable to God for his conduct, not you; nor ought you to play the pope, and usurp dominion, which neither God nor Christ hath given, to prevent it.

2. Ought Unbelievers to be *acknowledged* as members of our churches? If you use the word church in the sense

in which it is used in the New Testament, and they unite with you regularly in your public services, they are, in fact, members, whether you acknowledge them or not; and it has been shewn that you have no right to exclude them, no, not from the Lord's Supper, if so unlikely a thing should occur as for any of them to wish to receive it. I see not what you have to do with the matter, more than giving them wholesome advice and instruction, and leaving them to judge and act for themselves; unless, which I hope will never be the case, you forget that you are only servants, and, contrary to the express injunction of Christ, become masters; and, if you do that, think of the awful account you will have to give to him, your great Master, and the only master that God hath appointed, in the great day when he will come to reckon with his servants!

3. Is it right to allow Unbelievers, who regularly join in our public services, to have a vote in the choice of the minister, or other officers appointed in our churches? As your churches are free assemblies, who come together on the principles of equal rights and liberties in all religious matters, I see not how you can, consistently with such principles, deprive any individual, in such free assemblies, of the right of voting in the choice of the minister and other officers. Say there is an Unbeliever in one of your churches; he attends regularly with you; from time to time you receive his subscription towards the support of the cause—can you, consistently with the liberty for which you contend, and on which you generally act, or even with common justice, deprive him of a vote in the choice of the minister on whom he and his family mean to attend, and to whose support he will contribute—or in the choice of those officers who are to manage the funds to which he contributes? After all, persons thus regularly joining with you, are more likely to be merely reputed than real Unbelievers; they may believe less than you, or talk sometimes sceptically, and yet not be mere Deists. At any rate, the best way is to leave them to God and their own consciences; remembering that the rights of conscience are sacred, and that if religious domination once enter, it will soon make deep wounds in your liberty and peace.

4. Ought an Unbeliever to be admitted to officiate as a minister among us, or to be chosen to take the lead in the management of our affairs as churches? It certainly would

not only be essentially wrong, it would be a most glaring absurdity, for a Christian congregation to choose a known Unbeliever to be their minister; I have never known of such a thing being done, and I think it morally impossible: and an honest Deist could not possibly assume the character of a minister of Christ; the Unbeliever who should do it would prove himself a base impostor, and, when detected, his conduct must excite indignation and abhorrence; even virtuous Unbelievers would despise such a man. Should an upright man, after being actually in the ministry, unhappily become an Unbeliever, every principle of honour and honesty would require him to resign an office for which he must feel himself disqualified: and if he had not virtue enough to do it, the congregation, so soon as they knew him to be an Unbeliever, ought to request him to discontinue his services. It would be inexpedient and inconsistent to choose persons to manage even the pecuniary affairs of a Christian congregation, who were known to be Unbelievers, though they might have all the judgment and integrity requisite, because, as their appointment would be the act of the congregation, and for Christian purposes, those appointed should be known to be Christians: though the management of pecuniary affairs is very different from the holding of the office and character of a Christian teacher, still every thing done by a Christian congregation should have legible marks of Christian character.

5. If Unbelievers remain in some of our congregations, what is to be done to prevent the inroads of scepticism and unbelief among us? This is a question far too weighty to be properly answered just at the close of a letter which is already longer than I had intended to make it; therefore, with the Editor's permission, I intend making the answer to the above question the subject of another letter; in which I shall attempt to shew, that this may be done most effectually by fully admitting and acting upon the principles which I have already stated; by allowing reputed Unbelievers, to whatever degree their scepticism or unbelief may extend, to enjoy any Christian means or privileges among us which they think they can consistently embrace.

In the mean time, I remain, my dear Brethren, most truly and affectionately, Yours, &c.,

R. WRIGHT.



INTELLIGENCE.

Plan for the Supply of Sunday-School Books.

THE following heads of a plan for supplying the want of suitable books, so long experienced in Unitarian Sunday-schools, are submitted to the consideration of the managers of those institutions.

1. That for providing and publishing such books, a capital of £50 shall be forthwith raised in 10 shares of £5 each, *to be advanced by Sunday-schools either individually or collectively*; on which shares interest at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum shall be paid in the society's publications. 2. That the society shall be managed by a committee of ten persons, *one to be nominated annually by the holder or holders of each share*;* and that a Treasurer and Secretary shall be annually chosen out of and by this committee. 3. That an annual account of the progress and state of the institution shall be rendered to the shareholders. 4. That the shares shall be, under certain regulations, *transferable*. 5. That the shareholders shall receive interest upon every £10 *increase* in the property of the society.

When it is considered that the society will be secure of a sale amongst its own members, there seems little reason to apprehend a failure of the scheme.

Two shares have been already taken, one by the Worshipful Street Sunday-school, and one for a Sunday-school in Hoxton, by Mr. John Mardon, of No. 38, Gloucester Street, Hoxton, of whom further particulars may be had, and to whom all communications on this subject (if by letter, post-paid) are to be addressed.

Dover and Canterbury Sunday-School Union.

THE Second Annual Meeting of the Dover and Canterbury Sunday-School Union, was held at Canterbury, on Tuesday, July 18, 1826. About 60 friends assembled together, and the meeting appeared to lose nothing of that interest which was excited at the formation of the Union. The reports from the two schools were highly satisfactory. Several excellent addresses were given, and of these, those from the Monitors of the Dover school were heard with lively pleasure, as promising much future usefulness. The success which has attended a Magazine in manuscript, which was commenced last year, was noticed by several of the speakers, and hopes expressed that it would possess increasing interest. The want of a complete set of books for Sunday-school instruction, suited to our senti-

* As the seat of the society will be in London, schools in the country will generally, it is presumed, have some friend in the Metropolis willing to serve on the committee.

ments as Unitarians, was again mentioned, and a proposal made to apply to the British and Foreign Unitarian Association to take the subject under their notice, which met with the cordial approbation of the meeting, as the most likely means to obtain so desirable an object. All appeared highly gratified with the proceedings of the day, and the writer of this hopes all his fellow-labourers in the important work of the religious instruction of the rising generation who were with him, departed with hearty resolves of continued assiduity and perseverance. A.

Somerset, Gloucester and Wilts Unitarian Missionary Association.

THE next Half-yearly General Meeting of this Association, will be held at Calne, on Wednesday, September 13th, when the Rev. B. Waterhouse, of Warminster, is expected to preach. Service to commence at half-past Eleven.

British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

WE are desired to state, for the information of the subscribers and friends, that the First Report of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association is published. An Appendix relative to the Calcutta Mission, with a complete List of Subscribers, has been annexed.

The Report will be forwarded for general distribution in the country; but as there may be individuals to whom it cannot be conveniently delivered, they may procure it by application at the Rooms of the Association, 3, Walbrook Buildings, Walbrook; or of Mr. Rowland Hunter, 72, St. Paul's Churchyard; Mr. David Eaton, 187, High-Holborn; or of Messrs. Teulon and Fox, 67, Whitechapel, London.

OBITUARY.

1826. July 2, in the 55th year of her age, at Newbridge House, *Pulborough, Sussex*, ELIZABETH, the wife of Mr. R. EVERSLED, of an epidemic fever. The attack was sudden and severe. She lived a week after its commencement, when being exhausted by suffering and fatigue, she expired without a struggle, leaving a husband and eight children to lament her loss.

She was interred in the burial-ground adjoining the General Baptist Chapel, Billingshurst, July 7; and on the 16th instant a sermon, suited to the affecting event, was preached from Psalm xlviii. 14, by the Rev. *William Chinnock*.

Mrs. Evershed was the second daughter of the late Mr. John King, of Great House, Loxwood. By instruction and habit she was trained to the profession of the established religion. Hav-

ing lived several years with a grandmother who imbued her mind with what is denominated Orthodoxy, she received the doctrines of the Trinity, the Fall and the Atonement as popularly explained, and believed that regeneration must be wrought on the heart by the Holy Spirit, to render men acceptable to God; but she could not receive, as true, the doctrine of Election and Reprobation. This she always considered at variance with the Divine attributes of justice and mercy.—After her marriage, which took place in 1797, as often as opportunity offered, she attended worship with her husband, at the General Baptist Chapel, Billingshurst. Her sentiments remained unaltered for a considerable time. But many years' attendance at a place of worship in which the Divine Unity, Paternity, and unpurchased Mercy of God were inculcated, considerable reading, and mature reflection, effected a change in her faith. She became a decided convert to these doctrines, and experienced much pleasure in taking a retrospective view of the changes which her religious opinions had undergone. Not having relinquished them until she was fully convinced of their being *unscriptural*, she was free from misgiving. Recently she read, with much satisfaction, Dr. Estlin's Lectures, and was particularly pleased with that on Divine Government. After reading this lecture, she said, "The view which he takes of the providence of God is satisfactory: all the Divine plans are wise and benevolent: whatever the Supreme Being appoints *is best*." These consoling and cheering sentiments influenced her mind during her illness. Almost the last words she uttered to her deeply affected husband were, "Oh! how happy I feel with my present convictions; being in great pain, I am not able to express myself as I could wish; but I never felt so happy in my life!" These were consoling declarations to her sympathizing husband and children, who were soon bereaved of so valuable a companion and preceptor.

Mrs. Evershed possessed mental and moral qualities of a superior order. She highly prized knowledge, and was anxious to make all within her influence sensible of its worth and importance. Though she had seen reason gradually to relinquish her early-formed opinions on some religious subjects, she retained and cultivated the *spirit of piety*. She indulged unfeigned reverence and love to God, affection to Jesus Christ, as the divinely-appointed Instructor and Saviour of men, and an earnest desire to obey his righteous precepts. She discharged in the most exemplary manner the duties of a wife, parent, friend, and neighbour. Her humility was equalled only by her excellence. She had a deep sense of the imperfection and sinfulness of man. Her hope of future life and happiness was founded on the mercy and grace of God, as revealed by his beloved Son Jesus Christ. She committed herself to God *in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator*, relying on his promise, that if we are *faithful unto death, we shall receive a crown of life*.

Billingshurst, Aug. 15, 1826.

W. C.

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SEPTEMBER.

[Vol. XII.]

Letters from the Rev. R. Wright, to the Unitarians in the North-east District.

LETTER VI.

Trowbridge, September 5, 1826.

MY CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

IN this letter I shall attempt to answer the question, "If Unbelievers remain in some of our congregations, what is to be done to prevent the inroads of scepticism and unbelief among us?" It is presumed this may be done more effectually in connexion with the liberal, than with the illiberal treatment of Unbelievers. Illiberal treatment, while it contributes nothing towards their conviction, will tend to irritate and disaffect them to Christianity and its professors, and to rouse them from inactivity and silence to more direct and open opposition to the gospel; it will be natural for them to repel what they deem unjust censure and ill treatment, by endeavouring to convince others that they have strong grounds for their doubts and unbelief; and your treatment of them will gain them the more attention, and give force and currency to their observations and arguments with many persons. Besides, their being treated with illiberality will create a sympathy with them and a prejudice in their favour, among those whose minds revolt at whatever seems uncharitable, and especially among the young, who are most in danger of being misled by them. If, on the contrary, you act towards them in the manner I have recommended in a preceding letter, it will have a tendency to conciliate their attention to what they hear in favour of Christianity; and, if they be not convinced, to render them the more passive, and restrain them in their opposition to the gospel: it will prevent sympathy and prejudice from being created in their favour, and their having opportunity of saying, that you feel it necessary to resort to other weapons than those of evidence and fair argument in support of your religion. It is easy to perceive which of these courses will be the most creditable to yourselves, and the most honourable to

the truth which you profess. I have witnessed the injurious effects of the former, and the good consequences of the latter course ; which certainly is most in unison with the Christian character and with the spirit of our holy religion.

To prevent as far as possible, the inroads of scepticism and unbelief among you, and especially among your young people, is certainly of the utmost importance ; and I will point out the methods which I conceive best for you to adopt for this purpose.

1. Use all possible means to be well acquainted with the grounds and evidences of what you believe and profess, that you may continue firmly established in the faith and hope of the gospel. It is not enough that you have already examined those grounds and evidences ; it is necessary for you to have them in remembrance, to keep them steadily in view, that you may not be soon shaken in your minds. It will be found that the generality of those who have gone over to the ranks of Unbelievers, never seriously and closely examined the grounds and evidences of Christianity, but had merely taken its truth for granted without much thought and consideration ; hence, it is not to be wondered that, when plausible objections to divine revelation are urged upon them, they are turned from the faith. Let what you profess be the result of serious and close thought and examination, and of inward conviction : if this be the case with the bulk of those who belong to your churches, unbelief will not make any fatal inroads among you. In particular, the rising generation among you should be well-instructed in the evidences and leading principles of Christianity, that they may grow up not merely nominal Christians, but rational and practical believers. If they be not instructed in the grounds and principles of the religion they are taught to profess, whether you have Unbelievers in your congregations or not, they will be likely to fall in the way of such persons, and to be carried off from their Christian profession.

2. As the objections and arguments of Unbelievers derive most of their bearing and force from the corruptions of Christianity, you must carefully distinguish Christianity from its corruptions, and continue to maintain and profess it in its purity. Against pure and primitive Christianity the shafts of Infidelity will fall pointless ; but if the errors and corruptions which have been sanctioned with its venerable name be retained, though there should be no Unbe-

liever in your camp, the shafts of Infidelity would enter it and take effect. Christianity is no further invulnerable than it is pure and undefiled.

3. Avoid desultory controversy, and the keeping up of a kind of continual running fight with Unbelievers. In such desultory controversy, it is seldom that any thing is properly explained, or any premises accurately stated and led out to their just conclusions. Some stroke of wit, or smart repartee, may be remembered, but not what will lead on to conviction. Though you should not decline controversy when it can be attended to in a serious and candid manner, yet you ought not to attempt to force it upon those who differ from you, nor ever engage in it when you have reason to think it will not be conducted in a serious, dispassionate manner. If you keep up a kind of constant skirmish with such Sceptics and Unbelievers as remain in your churches, it will be likely to produce bad effects; it will be likely to interrupt the free exercise of the kindly feelings and affections, and to lead on to strife and vain jangling. The avoiding of frequent controversy with such persons will be more likely to conciliate their attention and prepare them to receive conviction, while they see you illustrate Christianity by your spirit and conduct, than merely disputing with them, and it will be likely to prevent any injurious effects which might arise from their continuing with you.

4. That you may be fortified against the inroads of scepticism and unbelief, consider, and keep constantly in view, the value and practical importance of Christianity; and what you would lose by relinquishing it, for which unbelief could make no compensation. If Christianity be entertained as merely a theory of opinions or an outward form, without regarding it as perfectly suited to our nature and condition as mortal, dying creatures and as sinners, as containing a provision for our moral and spiritual wants, and as necessary for our improvement and happiness, it may be relinquished for a different theory, and what is regarded as matter of form may be given up as useless; but if Christianity be regarded as our life, if its vitality be perceived and felt, if it be found a daily source of moral strength and of joy and consolation, and if the immortal hope it inspires glows in our breasts, it will be impossible for unbelief to offer us an equivalent which can induce us to relinquish what appears to us of such inestimable value

and vital importance. Always keep in mind that, if you give up Christianity, you relinquish the hope of eternal life, the authoritative declarations of the mercy and forgiveness of God, the most powerful motives to a virtuous and benevolent life, and the best ground of support and comfort under all the trials and afflictions of this mortal state. And for what do you make so great a sacrifice? For perpetual doubts—to wander in the cheerless regions of Infidelity! There is not a truly rational sentiment maintained by Unbelievers that Christianity does not own and support by stronger proofs. It is impossible you should gain any thing by becoming Unbelievers, but your loss will be incalculably great. To fortify your young people against scepticism and unbelief, not only acquaint them with the grounds and evidences of Christianity, but shew them its suitableness to man; and teach them its practical value and importance; it is not necessary to lead them into the controversy with Unbelievers: to bring them to the knowledge of Christianity as a vital and practical religion, and to perceive and feel its inestimable value, will do more towards making and preserving them real Christians, than their exploring all the thorny mazes of controversy, however good a clew they might have to guide them.

5. It is essentially necessary, if you have Unbelievers in your churches, that the style of preaching and manner of conducting the public services be not altered in the least on their account. To diminish the truly Christian character of the public discourses, or of any part of the service, to please them, would be highly improper, and the minister who should do this would shew himself an unfaithful servant of Jesus Christ. On the other hand, to depart from the ordinary mode of preaching and conducting the services designed to meet the moral and spiritual wants of the hearers at large, that all may have food for their souls and be instructed and edified, in order to bring forward the controversy with Deists, would also be wrong, and be likely to do harm. To seem to single out any individuals in a congregation and preach only to them, or with a view to their particular notions, may justly be taken as matter of offence, and is likely to irritate and do harm. A controversial mode of preaching should seldom be adopted, and it requires no little judgment and prudence to conduct it in such a manner as will be to edification. It is by the plain preaching of the gospel in its purity and simplicity,

with animation, in a persuasive and affectionate manner, pursuing every subject to its practical influence and uses, and conducting every part of the service in a truly spiritual and evangelical manner, that the inroads of scepticism and unbelief will be likely to be prevented, the churches be edified, and the cause carried on with success among you.

6. Though much depends on the labours of your ministers in public and private, much also depends on your co-operating with them, and unless you all do your part, their labours will be likely to fail, at least of the full success which might attend them. To guard against the inroads of scepticism and unbelief it is necessary for you to cultivate and, to the utmost of your power, promote deep seriousness in all religious matters, and a devotional spirit and practice.

If persons learn to jest about religion and the Sacred Scriptures, it shews them forgetful of their high importance, and the ridicule and witticisms of Unbelievers may make them captives. Without associating gloom with religion, its infinite importance ought to command seriousness whenever we think or speak of it. If a spirit of devotion be not cultivated and cherished, and devotional exercises attended to as the means of preserving it among you, you will be in danger of becoming speculative and formal, of losing the savour and vital influence of Christianity, and in such a state of mind you will be ill prepared to withstand the insidious attacks of Infidelity. If you carefully examine you will find, that those who, in your district, have become Unbelievers, are either persons who never shewed much seriousness in religion, who never appeared to have cultivated a devotional spirit, or to pay much regard to devotional exercises; or those who learned to talk of religion with some degree of levity, lost the devotional spirit they once cherished, became negligent of religious duties, and, after thus losing their seriousness and piety, became sceptical and unbelieving. Where personal and family religion have been continued with true seriousness, and a spirit of genuine piety has been carefully cherished, it will be found that scepticism and unbelief have not made inroads. In those places and families where there has been the least seriousness; where the spirit and practice of Christian devotion have been most neglected, you will find scepticism and unbelief have made the most progress. I thus point out the evil in order to

enforce the remedy. Do all you can to promote true seriousness and a real sense of religion; cultivate to the utmost of your power the spirit and practice of rational and pure devotion. Neglect not family worship and the religious instruction of your children; and habituate them to attention to the Scriptures and to public worship, if you would not leave them to fall into scepticism and unbelief.

It will be in vain for you to complain of the existence of Unbelievers in some of your churches, if you do not adopt such measures as are calculated to prevent their increase. If you could banish every Sceptic and Unbeliever now found among you, if you continued to neglect the advice which, with all plainness and faithfulness, I now give you, others would soon spring up among you; but I hope better things of you, my brethren. I entreat and beseech you, by the love I bear you, by my former labours among you, by your regard to your own eternal welfare, by your concern for the happiness of your families in time and to eternity, and by your regard to the glory of God and the honour of our Lord Jesus Christ, to consider what I have said in this letter, to lay it to heart and reduce it to practice. In my next letter I shall enter on another subject.

In the mean time, I remain, with ardent wishes and fervent prayers for the prosperity of your churches, most faithfully and affectionately, Yours, &c.,

R. WRIGHT.

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Mahometan Zeal and Orthodoxy.

[From Denham and Clapperton's Travels in Northern and Central Africa. 4to. 1826. Pp. 123—125.]

APRIL 25th. The news of the presents I had produced brought early this morning fifteen of the sultan's sons, with double the number of followers, to my tent: they all wanted gunpowder, knives and scissors; I had, however, neither one nor the other to give them. Two or three of the oldest of the princes got a French silk handkerchief each, and one a pair of cotton socks, and of course the others went away sadly discontented. I this morning ventured to make two attempts at sketching, but my apparatus and myself were carried off without ceremony to the sultan. My pencils marking without ink created great astonishment, and the facility with which its traces were effaced by Indian rubber seemed still more astonishing. My old antagonist Malcom

Chadily was there, and affected to treat me with great complaisance: he talked a great deal about me and my country, which made his hearers repeatedly cry out, "Y-e-o-o-o!" but what the purport of his observations were I could not make out. I endeavoured, however, to forget all his former rudeness, took every thing in good part, and appeared quite upon as good terms with him as he evidently wished to appear to be with me. Several words were written both by him and the others, which the rubber left no remains of; at length the fighi wrote, Bismillah Arachmani Arachme, (In the name of the great and most merciful God,) in large Koran characters: he made so deep an impression on the paper, that after using the Indian rubber the words still appeared legible. "This will not quite disappear," said I. "No, no," exclaimed the fighi, exulting; "they are the words of God delivered to our prophet. I defy you to erase them!" "Probably so," said I; "then it will be vain to try." He shewed the paper to the sultan and them around him with great satisfaction; they all exclaimed, "Y-e-o-o-o! La illah el Allah! Mohammed rassoul Allah!" cast looks at me expressive of mingled pity and contempt, and I was well pleased when allowed to take my departure.

The whole of this scene was repeated to Barca Gana in his tent in the evening, and they all exclaimed, "Wonderful! wonderful!" and as I did not contradict any part of this account, the fighi thus addressed me: "Rais, you have seen a miracle! I will shew you hundreds, performed alone by the words of the wonderful book. You have a book also, you say; but it must be false. Why? Because it says nothing of Saidna Mohammed; that is enough. Shed! Shed! turn! turn! Say, God is God, and Mohammed is his Prophet. Sully (wash) and become clean, and paradise is open to you: without this, what can save you from eternal fire? Nothing! Oh! I shall see you, while sitting in the third heaven, in the midst of the flames, crying out to your friend Barca Gana and myself Malem, 'Saherbi, (friend,) give me a drink or a drop of water!' but the gulf will be between us, and then it will be too late." The Malem's tears flowed in abundance during this harangue, and every body appeared affected by his eloquence. I felt myself at this period extremely uncomfortable; and Barca Gana, who saw my distress, called me into the inner tent, where nobody accompanied him except by invitation. "The fighi,"

said he, "is a ragal alom" (a very clever man). "Very likely," said I; "but he surely might leave me to my own belief, as I leave him to his." "Staffer Allah!" (God forbid!) said he: "do not compare them." "I do not," said I, "God knows; but you, Kashella, should protect me from such repeated annoyances." "No," replied Barcan, "in this I cannot interfere. Malem is a holy man. Please God you will be enlightened, and I know the sheikh wishes it; he likes you, and would you stay amongst us he would give you fifty slaves of great beauty, build you a house like his son's, and give you wives from the families of any of his subjects you choose." "Were you to return to England with me, Kashella, as you sometimes talk about, with the sheikh's permission, would it not be disgraceful for you to turn Christian and remain? Were I to do as you would have me, how should I answer to my sultan who sent me?" "God forbid!" said he. "You are comparing our faiths again: I propose to you eternal paradise, while you would bring me to ——" "Not a word more," said I. "Good night. Peace be with you." "I hope we shall always be friends," said he. "Please God," returned I. "Amen," said the Kashella.

Penitent Malefactor's Address to our Lord.

SIR,

Dalston, September 8, 1826.

AMONG the many interesting traits of character which the Scriptures exhibit, few, I think, exceed the account of the penitent malefactor, recorded in Luke xxiii. 40—43.

According to the expectations of the Jews, the Messiah was to have been a great personage, who would restore the Israelitish nation to its former glory, and, after rescuing them from the oppression of their conquerors, become their sovereign.

Such were not the pretensions of the man who presented himself as the claimant of this high distinction: born in humble life, the associate of fishermen and the lower orders of society, the preacher of a doctrine which possessed no attractions for the worldly-disposed and self-opinionated, but levelled the pre-eminence of which they boasted, and raised those to an equality whom they despised.

The few who became the disciples of Jesus, I imagine, were attracted by the hope of gain; they flattered themselves, no doubt, with the idea that Christ would establish

a temporal kingdom, and raise them to the highest offices in it; for we find (Mark ix. 34) "they disputed among themselves who should be the greatest;" Luke xx. 21, "the mother of Zebedee's children" desired places for her sons; and all indeed, from a misconstruction of his language, entertained false conceptions of his character.

With impressions like these, can we conceive of the disappointment and dismay which pervaded the minds of the disciples when on the cross hung he whom in anticipation they had long beheld as the "Prince of the kings of the earth"? Was not their faith then shaken, and did not their hearts inwardly respond to the exclamation of the mocking populace which surrounded them, "If he be the Christ, let him come down from the cross, and we will believe in him," "He saved others, let him save himself"?

Yet under all these circumstances, the partner of his fate believed; and, rebuking the other malefactor for his unreasonable request, he contrasted their guilt and the justice of their punishment with the innocence of Jesus; and, separating external appearances from reality, he addressed the dying man, in language apparently unsuitable to his situation, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."

Perhaps he might have heard some of our Lord's discourses, or he might even have witnessed some of the miracles he wrought, but he was certainly destitute of those private admonitions and instructions; the transfiguration, the ministration of angels, the voice from heaven, he had never observed: these and many other advantages the apostles possessed, but they left to the penitent malefactor the sole honour of furnishing to the world an example of a faith uninfluenced by conditions, and a true, philosophic resignation to the will of God.

GUILLAUME.

Curious Superstition in Edward the Third's Reign.

ABOUT the year 1350, in the reign of Edward III., the dreadful pestilence which had broken out in the North of Asia, and with a destroying course made its way through Europe, approached England. This plague was called *The Black Death*; and it truly deserved the name in England, where it has been said that nine out of ten persons were swept away by the awful calamity. This is probably

334 *Curious Superstition in Edward the Third's Reign.*

an exaggeration, though it is chronicled that there fell at Yarmouth above 7000 persons, and in Norwich more than 50,000. It is complained that the plague stripped the church of the priests. Law-suits and sessions of Parliament were suspended. The poor Jews were charged with the visitation, though it is difficult to conceive how they drew it down upon the country.

Lingard, the Roman Catholic writer of the *History of England*, thus describes the effects of the plague upon some men's minds:

"The piety of the age attributed this destructive visitation to the anger of the Almighty; but in speculating on the causes which provoked that anger, every writer seems to have been swayed by personal prejudices or local considerations. All, however, embraced the opportunity to inveigh against the prevailing extravagance of dress, the silk hoods and party-coloured coats of the men, their deep sleeves and narrow confined waists, the indecent shortness of their hose, and the ridiculous length of their pointed shoes, the bushy beard before and the tail of hair behind. Some had even the temerity to extend their censure to the females, whom they affected to describe as having renounced the native modesty of their sex, to ape the manners and adopt in a great measure the dress of the men. No lady of distinction, if we may believe them, could now ride on a palfrey; she must be mounted on a spirited charger. Her head was encircled with a turban, or covered with a species of mitre of enormous height, from the summit of which ribbons floated in the air like the streamers from the head of a mast. Her tunic was half of one colour and half of another: a zone deeply embroidered and richly ornamented with gold, confined her waist, and from it were suspended in front two daggers in their respective pouches. Thus attired she rode in the company of her knight to jousts and tournaments, partook of the different diversions of the men, and by her levity and indiscretion afforded food to the lovers and retailers of scandal. Whatever the reader may think of these censures, he must be entertained with the descriptions.

"But there is one discovery I must not omit, that of the fanatics denominated Flagellants or Whippers. It was their peculiar felicity not only to know that the mortality was sent in punishment of sin, but to be in possession of the only means by which the remission of sin could be

effected. Divided into companies of male and female devotees, under a leader and two masters, they stripped themselves naked to the waist and publicly scourged themselves or each other, till their shoulders were covered with blood. This expiatory ceremony was repeated every morning and afternoon for thirty-three days, equal in number to the years which Christ is thought to have lived upon earth; after which they returned to their former employments, cleansed from sin by 'the baptism of blood.' The Flagellants appeared first in Hungary, but missionary societies were soon formed, and they hastened to impart the knowledge of this new gospel to foreign nations. They spread with rapidity over Poland, Germany and the Low Countries. From France they were excluded at the request of the Pope, who had issued a severe constitution against them; * but a colony reached England and landed in London to the amount of one hundred and twenty men and women. Each day at the appointed hour they assembled, ranged themselves in two lines, and moved slowly through the streets, scourging their naked shoulders and chanting a sacred hymn. At a known signal, all, with the exception of the last, threw themselves flat on the ground. He, as he passed by his companions, gave each a lash, and then also lay down. The others followed in succession, till every individual in his turn had received a stroke from the whole brotherhood. The citizens gazed and marvelled, pitied and commended; but they ventured no farther. Their faith was too weak, or their feelings were too acute; and they allowed the strangers to monopolize to themselves this novel and extraordinary grace. The missionaries made not a single proselyte, and were compelled to return home with the barren satisfaction of having done their duty in the face of an unbelieving generation."—*History of England*, 4to ed., III. 68—70.

* "L'Evesque has given us too stanzas of one of their hymns, p. 531. They run in the following strain:

"Through love of man the Saviour came,
Through love of man he died:
He suffered want, reproach and shame,
Was scourged and crucified.
Oh! think then on thy Saviour's pain,
And lash the sinner, lash again."



To Mr. Worsley, on his Communication on "Lay Preaching."

(See Christian Reformer, p. 296.)

DEAR SIR, *Rolvenden, Sept. 10, 1826.*

YOUR remarks on Lay Preaching are to me a high gratification. It is a subject which has occupied much of my thoughts, and I am persuaded that if the plan could be generally adopted, it would be attended with much good.

I am pleased and thankful that we have many ministers who are men of learning, and that we have a prospect of having a succession of this most valuable class of preachers; but if, in addition to the regular and stated labours of these, we had in our several congregations a number of pious and intelligent persons capable of acting in the capacity of local auxiliary preachers, it would be useful. In how many villages around our stated places of worship might they supply, especially on Sunday evenings, and preach the plain truths of pure Christianity; and how many small congregations are there in different parts of the country who are unable to support an educated minister, which local preachers might supply! And is it not lamentable that any of these places should be shut up and the cause lost?

The general state of education is now much improved, and the means of general information may be obtained in our own language. The plan, therefore, of local auxiliary preaching appears practicable.

The qualifications necessary for this good work are what *every Christian* should strive to attain; and whatever qualifications any Christian possesses, it is his duty to use them for the good of others. Every privilege has its corresponding duty, and every duty its privilege.

The first qualification is personal piety, and without this every other acquirement is "as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." "Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction and castest my words behind thee?" And surely every reflecting Christian must acknowledge that this qualification is needful for every one to attain.

A second qualification for this great and good work is a general knowledge of the Holy Scriptures: the more they can be committed to memory the better; added to this, a

general knowledge of theological subjects. And ought not Christians generally to seek to make every possible progress in knowledge? Is it not of the highest importance and utility?

A third qualification is arrangement; the dependence and connexion of ideas; what constitutes a proof of any point, and what are its proper uses; so as to be able to form a judicious plan of a profitable and edifying discourse. And if Christians in general were to make this the subject of their study, they would find it profitable in their private meditations, and in reading and hearing it would assist their comprehension and strengthen their memories. That which we understand the best, we retain the longest.

A fourth qualification for a local preacher is utterance, an ability to communicate the ideas which he has on his mind to the hearers, in such a manner as to enable them to understand, and to entertain and edify them. The habit of free extemporaneous speaking is much easier to be attained than is generally supposed. From our infancy we are in the daily habit of it, so that whatever ideas we have on our mind we can readily communicate to others. Clear and distinct ideas properly arranged are the foundation of free extemporary speaking, and public speaking becomes easy by practice, if a suitable preparation be first made. Meetings for free religious conversation and conferences are calculated to promote an ability for local preaching.

A fifth qualification is persevering zeal and activity, arising from a sense of the importance of religion, and from the holy principle of love to God, to Christ and to mankind. These, with a competent knowledge of the English Grammar, are the leading qualifications for a local preacher.

Let us suppose, then, that Unitarians were generally improving their privileges to the utmost of their power, in attaining these valuable acquirements, and we might then apply to them the declaration of Paul to the primitive Christians, "But ye, brethren, are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another."

Happy should I be to see this plan carried into full effect, and I hope that all our educated ministers will give it that support and encouragement which you have given it. I remain, dear Sir, yours respectfully,

T. PAYNE

On Lay Preaching.

SIR,

September 17, 1826.

WITH but little leisure at present for polemical disquisition, it is not my intention to examine the *pros* and *cons* of what is commonly called *lay preaching*; but, happening to open the Reformer for August last, (pp. 296—303,) I read with some interest Mr. Worsley's account of the presentation of Belsham's valuable work on the Epistles of St. Paul, to Mr. Sylvanus Gibbs, as a tribute of respect for his services in that *noiseless* and, perhaps, too little honoured way, considering that the Founder of the Christian system and his coadjutors and followers were not *priests*, but *laymen*. With Mr. Worsley's preliminary observations I perfectly agree; and although Mr. Gibbs, as a *lay preacher*, modestly observes, "that it has always been his opinion that an academical education is most essential to the Christian ministry," his own example, and the sense which seems to be entertained of his success and usefulness by those who have had the immediate opportunity of appreciating his talents, indicate, at least, that the absence of an academical education does not disqualify a man from enforcing those truths of Christianity and revealed religion, with fruits, at least two-fold, if not ten-fold, in the belief and practice of which, pure and undefiled religion before God the Father consists. My object, however, as I have already said, is not to discuss the merits or demerits of lay preaching; this I leave to others and to time, which, as is observed by a good political, if not theological, writer, in some cases makes more converts than reason; but in the same ratio that men think for themselves, discarding creeds and valuing the Scriptures, the only pure fountain of religious truth, I feel persuaded that lay preaching will rise in the estimation of mankind.—To come, however, to the object of this hastily written paper: I have observed in most essays on lay preaching, that what appears to me of no little importance is overlooked, namely, the *advantage* which is derived from the practice to the preacher himself. It is observed by one of my favourite authors, that "teaching, we learn;" and if so, which is indisputable, the practice of lay teaching or preaching is highly beneficial to the teacher himself. Simply to hear sermons and lectures, or even to read them, does not require that close attention and examination which he who engages in

the active employment of teaching finds to be indispensable. He who would teach others must first learn himself; and, whatever be the cause, unless men are driven, almost, into close study and application, there seems to be a listlessness about them generally which produces a kind of mental apathy; and this, to beings framed as we are with intellectual capacities, designed, no doubt, by the Giver for constant and perpetual improvement and expansion, at least in this variable state, is much to be regretted. Hence, in religious knowledge, I infer, as well as in all other branches of inquiry, the greatest progress will be made by him who teaches; because teaching requires study and application, and study and application are the only means by which we can become truly learned or skilful on any subject. As with the body, so it is with the mind. To give tension to the nerves and vigour to the muscles, we must use exercise, and not content ourselves with listening to lectures on riding and walking and leaping, &c. One race will be of more physical service than a thousand treatises, in bracing the arms, setting the joints, and strengthening the sinews. And so with respect to the mind; he who merely attends to the instructions of others, however good and excellent those instructions may be, will never attain that mental vigour and command of intellect which are possessed by him who both teaches and hears. Academical tuition is no doubt of vast service to those who possess its advantages; but it must not be forgotten, that these, abstractedly, are chiefly valuable as they enable the future student to study with more profit than he who is without them; and that many of our brightest characters, who have adorned the republic of general literature with the fruits of genius, had no academic compass to guide them on the ocean of knowledge; but, thrown on their own resources, and depending on their own energies, have achieved a reputation and obtained a celebrity which the academic pretender has frequently panted for in vain.—It will not be understood from these remarks that I am inimical to the plan of a regular education for young men, whether designed for one profession or another; all that I conceive is, that Christianity, (properly so called,) at least in the present day, is as independent of academical learning, as it is of sin-offerings and cloud-topped churches, and that it can do as well without the one as the other.

D. DELARUE.

Facts relating to the Unitarian Controversy; and Serious Questions to all Lovers of Christian Truth.

PART I.

1. TRINITARIANS cannot produce a single passage of the Bible, in which the doctrine of the Trinity is stated, although it is very plainly defined in the Thirty-nine Articles, the Athanasian Creed, and the Westminster Confession of Faith.

2. Griesbach, the learned and impartial Editor of the Greek Testament, who completed his invaluable work A. D. 1806, rejects, from the 1st Epistle of St. John, (ch. v. 7, 8,) the words, "in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth." The critical evidence upon which this passage is maintained to be spurious, is held to be satisfactory by the generality of competent judges of all churches. Many of the theological writers of the present day, though avowed Trinitarians, have expressed their belief in its spuriousness; among whom are Dr. Marsh, Bishop of Peterborough;* Dr. Tomline, Bishop of Winchester;† Dr. Adam Clarke, the Wesleyan Methodist;‡ Mr. Charles Butler, the Roman Catholic;§ the *Electric Reviewer*, a Calvinist:|| Dr. Wardlaw, of Glasgow, avoids this and the other supposed Trinitarian passages that are affected by Griesbach's emendations in his controversy with Mr. Yates; and the *Quarterly Reviewer* has twice written expressly against the text.

3. Griesbach's reading in Acts xx. 28, instead of "church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood," is, "church of the Lord," &c., which is a common appellation for Jesus Christ.

4. Griesbach's reading, 1 Tim. iii. 16, instead of "God manifest in the flesh," is, "He who was manifest in the flesh."

5. Griesbach's reading, Rev. i. 8, is, *I am Alpha and Omega, saith the Lord God, &c.*, and i. 11, the words *I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, and*, are omitted by him.

* Translation of Michaëlis, Notes; and very lately in his Theological Lectures, Part VI.

† Elements of Christian Theology, Vol. II. p. 90.

‡ Commentary on the Passage.

§ *Horæ Biblicæ*.

|| January, 1809.

6. The words printed in italics in our Common Version denote that there is nothing corresponding to them in the original, e. g. the word *God*, Acts vii. 59, and *of God*, 1 John iii. 16.

7. Neither the word Trinity, nor any equivalent word, nor the phrases, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, Eternal Son, or Two Natures in Christ, occur in the Bible.

8. The Holy Spirit is never in the Bible proposed as a distinct object of religious worship. God is himself a spirit; and the true worshipers must worship the Father in spirit and in truth. John iv. 23, 24.

9. The powers of Christ are never, in the Bible, referred to God the Son, but invariably to the Father, or his Spirit.

10. Our blessed Saviour, in his solemn prayer, recorded in the 17th chapter of St. John's Gospel, declares the Father, to whom he is praying, (vers. 1, 5, &c.) to be *the only true God*, and (ver. 3) with the same breath claims for himself the character of *him whom the Father (the only true God) had sent*.

11. Luther, the celebrated Reformer, seriously objected to the use of the word *Trinity*. He observes, "The word Trinity sounds oddly, and is a *human invention*; it is better to call Almighty God, *God*, than *Trinity*." Calvin, in reference to a prayer of the Romish Missal, which has been copied into the Liturgy of the English Church, exclaims, "I like not this prayer, O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity; it savours of barbarity: the word Trinity is *barbarous, insipid, profane*, a human invention, grounded in no testimony of God's word; the *Pope's God*, unknown to Prophets and Apostles."

12. Catholic writers, of great celebrity, who have believed in the Trinity themselves, have yet confessed that, without having recourse to *tradition*, they could not prove their doctrine.

PART II.

1. If I had never seen any religious book besides the Bible, and had no other opportunity of gaining religious information, should I have known any thing of the three-fold nature of God, called the Trinity?

2. If so, from what text in the Bible should I have derived my information?

3. At any rate, is the doctrine expressed so plainly, and so frequently there, as the importance now attached to it would seem to require ?

4. Is there a single verse in the Bible that condemns the worship of the Unitarians, who worship the Father as the only true God ? John xvii. 3.

5. Does not the name *Son of God*, given to Jesus Christ, lead many to believe that he was God himself ? and yet, upon consideration, will not this appellation prove the contrary ? See Luke i. 35 ; John i. 49, v. 19 ; 1 Cor. xv. 27, 28, &c.

6. Do the best books in English, in defence of the Christian religion, e. g. Paley's *Evidences*, or Maltby's *Illustrations*, both written by clergymen of the Church of England, prove any thing more than that Christ received authority from heaven ?

7. Does Christ ever command his disciples to pray to the Trinity, to God the Son, or to God the Holy Ghost ?

8. Does not Jesus Christ describe the Father as the only true God, and command his disciples, when they prayed, to say, *Our Father* ? John xvii. 3 ; Luke xi. 2.

9. Does he not represent himself as "him whom the Father hath sent" ? (John xvii. 3 ;) and as "a man who told the truth which he had heard of God" ? John viii. 40.

10. Was not Jesus Christ's death an act of *obedience* ? Phil. ii. 8.

11. Whom did he *obey* ? And how could the death of an obedient *creature* (Luke i. 31) make an *infinite* satisfaction ?

12. Do not the blessings of Christ's death proceed from the Father's tender mercy ? Rom. v. 8 ; John iii. 16.

13. When the text of the Heavenly Witnesses is expunged from the First Epistle of St. John, is there a vestige or shadow of the real doctrine of the Trinity remaining in the Bible ?

14. But if the Scriptures be so destitute of evidence for this doctrine, is it not the duty of every Protestant, who loves his Bible, to disavow that doctrine, and attend Unitarian worship ?

15. Am I prevented from such a disavowal by any worldly motive ?

16. But will such motives appear indifferent to me at the hour of death, or can they be acceptable to God ?

17. Has not Jesus Christ denounced his displeasure against those who are ashamed of him before men? Mark iii. 38.

18. Is not the cause of the Gospel in its purest form the cause of Jesus Christ?

19. Can the majority of Trinitarians be said to have derived their conviction from patient examination and mature consideration?

20. Am I allowed to follow a multitude to do evil, and, because it is the prevailing worship, to worship "a Popish God"?

Go, my fellow-christian, and answer these questions to thyself in thy closet, as thou lovest truth, and desirest the favour of thy Maker. And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with thee. Amen. 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

Let the serious inquirer examine attentively the following additional passages of the Bible; Exodus xx., Deut. vi. 4, compared with Mark xii. 29; Isaiah xlv. 6, xlv., compared with John viii. 41—54, and Acts iv. 21—31; also Mark xiii. 32; 1 Cor. viii. 6; 1 Tim. i. 17, ii. 5.

B. M.

The Messiah weeping over Jerusalem.

(From a volume of Poems, by HENRY ROGERS, a youth of 19.)

THE Persian Monarch, when he led

To Greece, in proud array,

His thousand thousand warriors, shed

A tear, to think that they,

Ere one brief hundred years had sped,

Should all be numbered with the dead.

He wept and bade his army go

To fight with Greece again:

A few short months, and Greece laid low

His warriors on the plain.

Thus his ambition gave the lie

To his own false humanity.

The haughty-minded Roman wept

At mighty Carthage fall;

But still the scenes o'er which he slept,

Himself had wrought them all;

He wept o'er scenes his sword had brought,

He wept o'er ruin he had wrought.

Not such as these were those blest tears
Which from Messiah fell,
When in the view of coming years,
His heart foreboded well
The misery of Salem's lot,
The desolation of that spot.

Oh ! they were foes for whom he mourned,
And foes he sought to save,
But they his pitying mercy spurned,
And all that mercy gave.
Such tears no human eye bedewed—
With Godlike love they were imbued.

Scripture and Scripture perverted.

"For we are not as many which corrupt the word of God." — PAUL.

*Scriptural expressions.**Perverted into.*

Holy Father, John xvii. 11,	Holy Trinity.
I am the Son of God, John x. 36,	God the Son.
God is a spirit, John iv. 24,	God is three persons.
The only true God, John xvii. 3,	Three-one God.
The only wise God, 1 Tim. i. 17,	Trine God.
The son of man, John v. 24,	God-man.
Lamb of God, John i. 36,	Atoning lamb.
Of one soul, Acts iv. 32,	Immortal soul.
Grace the gift of God, Ephes. ii. 8,	Purchased grace.
Jesus Christ, Gal. i. 12,	Jehovah Jesus.
God is one, Gal. iii. 20,	Three coequal Gods.
Jesus Christ is Lord, Phil. ii. 11,	Divinity of Christ.
Doeth righteousness, 1 John iii. 7,	Imputed righteousness.
Son of the Father, 2 John i. 3,	Eternal Son.
Is righteous, 1 John iii. 7,	Self-righteous.
For our God, Heb. xii. 29,	God out of Christ.
The atonement, Rom. v. 11,	Atoning blood.
Christ is God's, 1 Cor. iii. 23,	Christ is God.
The poor in spirit, Matt. v. 3,	Poor sinners.
Election of God, 1 Thess. i. 4,	Absolute election.
To save sinners, 1 Tim. i. 15,	Original sin.
The Holy Ghost, Acts x. 38,	God the Holy Ghost.

"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."
1 Pet. iv. 11.—Reader, are any of the phrases or expressions contained in the right hand column, to be found among those oracles?

R. W. W.

The Latter-Day Glory anticipated.

["AND it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it: The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf, and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw (herbage) like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp; and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Isa. ii. 2—4, xi. 6—9; Micah v. 1—5.

An Imaginary Scene.

A summer evening's walk on the banks of a navigable river running through an extensive plain; at the end of which the sun is setting. On either side stand beautiful rows of trees; in the valleys the flocks and the herds are all feeding in harmony.]

The Sun reclining in the west,
 The peaceful tribes of men at rest;
 The flocks and herds spread o'er the land,
 The trees in rows majestic stand:
 Silent and deep the water flows,
 Onward the stately vessel goes.
 The pious crew their grateful anthems raise
 And loud proclaim the great Creator's praise.

Along this pleasing path I rove,
 And sing and praise the God of love ;
 The nations now their God adore ;
 Cruel oppression is no more :
 The reign of wickedness is gone,
 The Saviour's glorious conquest won.
 Hail glorious King ! All earth shall speak thy fame,
 And heaven itself re-echo with thy name.

No warriors now their garments stain,
 No slave to bear the heavy chain ;
 No thief—no persecuting foe,
 No dungeon fill'd with human woe :
 But all is harmony and love,
 And earth resembles heaven above.

With one united voice all nations own
 True pleasure springs from piety alone.

Now the Creator from his throne,
 With pleasure on the world looks down,
 Now the Redeemer's kingdom stands,
 Established through all the lands :
 And all unite with one accord,
 To love, and serve, and praise the Lord.
 " Burst into praise, my soul ; all nature join ;
 Angels and men in harmony combine."

T. PAYNE.

Rolvenden, July 17, 1826.

The Death-bed of a Mother.

[From " The Recollections of Jotham Anderson, Minister of the Gospel," one of the publications for which we are indebted to the piety and zeal of our Unitarian brethren in the United States of America. The little volume thus entitled, was printed at Boston, in 1824. A continuation of it is promised, which when published we hope to receive from the same kind " American reader and friend," to whom we are indebted for this first part. ED.]

" My childhood passed like that of other children who have tender and watchful parents, and has left as few distinct traces, which are worth recording. The waves of time have flowed over the track which my little boat made, and I can discern its path no longer.

"I was in my thirteenth year when I lost my mother. This is one of the events which made a lasting impression. She had been, for a long time, gradually wasting away, and I had seen the anxious countenance and manner with which my father watched her. But a boy, even of thirteen, is not likely to understand or realize such signs, and I remember I had no foreboding of the coming calamity. But, at length, I observed an altered tone in the morning and evening prayer of my father, which impressed me. I began to suspect the truth. I observed more narrowly. I discovered that the form was wasted, the cheek had grown pale, the eye had sunk, and disease had made a fearful onset, while my childish eyes had been blinded. And I do not wonder that they were blinded; for the calm and cheerful manner of my mother was unaltered, and she spoke and smiled as she always had done. But I now saw the truth, and every hour served to make me see it yet more plainly. My solicitude soon betrayed itself, and then my father summoned resolution to speak upon the subject to his children. The others were younger than myself. They were frolicking in all the unapprehensive lightness of childhood, when he called us around him. There were four of us. The youngest sprung upon his knee, and playfully put her lips to his mouth; while the rest of us, who perceived the emotion upon his face, gazed upon him, and gave him our hands without speaking. As soon as he could command himself—'My children,' said he, 'God has given you a good mother; but he is about to take her away from you. You will not see her much longer. She is visited by a disease which is hurrying her to the grave, and we can do nothing but weep, and give her back to God. But we must not weep,' said he, bursting into tears, 'for she is only going home; going to be happy, which she has not been here. It would be wrong to mourn, for she is only going to sleep a sweet sleep, and we shall all, by and bye, sleep too, and then shall all rise together, if we have been good.'

"Not many days after this, my mother called me to her, as I sat in the chamber, and, kissing my cheek—'You are old enough,' said she, 'to know what death means, and to learn a lesson from it. I am soon to die. I have known it for a long time, and have perfectly prepared my mind to meet the event. I have no longer reluctance or fear. And now, my dear son, while I speak to you, perhaps for the

last time, hear my parting counsel. I have tried to teach you your duty, and to fill your mind with religious principles. Do not swerve from those principles. They are my support now, they always have been my support. You will need them as much as I do. And if you would cherish them, and have them strong, I charge you never pass a day without prayer.—Promise me this, and I shall feel easy.' I kissed her hand, and bowed my head; for I could not speak. She put her hand beneath the pillow, and taking thence a locket, containing a braid of her own hair, she gave it to me. 'I do not know,' said she, 'that departed spirits are acquainted with what happens to the friends they have left on earth; but if they are, I shall never cease to watch your life with maternal solicitude. Think of this whenever your eyes meet this memorial of my love. Reflect that, perhaps I see you, and remember the promise you have made me; or, if not so'—she added in a voice of inconceivable expressiveness,—reflect that *God* sees you, and bears witness whether you keep that promise or not. My dear son, farewell! a mother's parting blessing is on your head; and do Thou, O Father, bless him, and make him thine!' She kissed me again, and sunk back exhausted.

"It seems as if I still heard her voice, and gazed upon her composed, but animated features. And it is one of the joyful anticipations of my approaching removal from earth, that I shall again see that face, and be united to her pure spirit, never to part again. I had no spirit, after this, to leave her side, or to engage in any occupation. I was suffered to remain near her; to see the gradual approach of dissolution; and to witness the tranquillity and cheerfulness with which Christian faith can await the appalling summons. She was too weak to say much, but sometimes gave a word of encouragement, admonition or blessing, to those who were near her, and after she became unable to speak, she still looked unutterable things, and smiled upon those who did her any little offices of kindness.—All was peace within and without; and gently at last did she sink asleep in Jesus, without a groan or a struggle, and with an expression on her face as if she had already caught a glimpse of the glory to come.

"There are some who would keep children from the chamber of death, and remove from their minds, as soon as possible, the impressions which sorrow may have made.

They little consider the natural buoyancy of the mind, and the tendency of all feeling to pass away from a young heart. My father was one of those who thought the solemn impressions of such a season should be deepened, and pains taken to make them lasting. He thought that much might be done to give right views of the value and purposes of existence, and to get ready that frame of mind which is best fitted to meet and endure the changes of the world. By his conversation, therefore, and instruction, for a long period, he kept fresh the feelings to which this sad event had given birth.—He did not converse a great deal in the formal way; it was not his habit, and he rather avoided it, from a persuasion that it was not an effectual mode of addressing young persons. I do not think that he ever made a long harangue to his children upon any subject. His custom was to seize moments when their minds were cheerful and at ease, or when any remarkable event had excited their attention, and by a few concise, pointed remarks, sometimes by only one single emphatic expression, convey the important lesson. He would then leave it to work upon their minds. And it would often happen that the words would sink down into their hearts, and never be forgotten. I can recall many examples of forcible sayings thus uttered, which were of great use to me afterward; but am certain that the same sentiment, diluted into a formal speech of fifteen or twenty minutes, would have made no impression and been altogether lost.

“Upon the present occasion, he pursued his customary course. He spoke seldom; but because seldom, I dwelt the more upon what he did say. I forgot nothing. And as he directed my reading, and the whole occupation of my time, I was, for a long season, prevented from returning to the sports of my childhood, or regaining the frolicksome dispositions of boyhood.”

British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

SIR,

Lynn, Sept. 14, 1826.

THE contents of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association Report will, I flatter myself, afford satisfaction to most of our friends who have an opportunity to peruse them; and I am still further pleased to observe the evident wish on the part of the Committee to obtain publicity for their proceedings.

Perhaps the mode which, in my situation as minister to the Unitarian Congregation at Lynn, I adopted to make them known, may not have suggested itself to some equally anxious with myself to arouse the attention of those with whom they are connected : with your permission, then, I will briefly state it for their consideration.

After perusing, with considerable pleasure, a copy of the Report, my next desire was that all the friends to the cause connected with us at Lynn, should also know what was in progress and what had been done. Could I have given a copy to each, I concluded want of time, or of inclination, or even in some, want of ability, might have prevented perusal ; had I requested the attendance of the congregation on a week night to hear the contents of it read, business and various engagements might have kept many away. I therefore determined to incorporate what I regarded as the most interesting portions in my usual service on the evening of a Sunday. In consequence, I read to the congregation, with a few introductory and occasional explanatory remarks, the proceedings of the Committee, the extracts from the Missionaries' journals, the correspondence of Messrs. Adam and Roberts, and the proceedings of the friends to our cause in British India. With the plan thus pursued several expressed themselves pleased, and whatever may be the effects of the endeavour, I feel satisfaction in having endeavoured to arouse the attention of my friends to this important institution ; or whatever may be the conduct of those of them who are able to support it, at any rate, ignorance of its existence, its objects, or its means, cannot be their excuse.

My proceeding will of course be differently viewed by different people ; they who, like myself, feel the necessity for all classes in our body being interested in our success, will, perhaps, see nothing in it to disapprove, while some may adopt a similar plan. And if any regard such a plan as intrusive, injudicious, and unlikely to be productive of good, I only beg of them to be fully assured, that nothing but an ardent desire for the success of the " British and Foreign Unitarian Association," and, as I firmly believe, through that, for the happiness of my fellow-creatures, the kingdom of Christ and the glory of God, led to its adoption, by

WILLIAM SELBY.

The late Major Cartwright.

THERE are multitudes who know the character of this gentleman as a Parliamentary Reformer, but few probably who are acquainted with his exemplary domestic and social virtue and his truly Christian piety. These are brought before us in his "*Life*," just published by his Niece; * brought before us, not in declamation and panegyric, but by a series of facts, and by extracts from the correspondence of more than half a century.

Major Cartwright, though bold and adventurous, as became his profession—that of a seaman—was naturally of a serious disposition. He writes, for example, in 1773: "I have met with few works better calculated to promote the cause of religion than Locke's "*Reasonableness of Christianity as delivered in the Scriptures*." I never once heard it quoted or spoken of; but I think it the most satisfactory book of the kind I ever met with in my life, and the best key to the inspired writings of the New Testament." Vol. I. p. 50.

About the same time, he expressed himself as follows: "My friend * * * could not have flattered me more successfully than by attributing to me a disposition for making the best of every thing; as I take it to be one of the essentials in religion of every one who believes in a Providence, and of a Christian in particular; for I have no doubt but that it is our business to turn every hour and every minute in life to our advantage, whether it be prosperous or otherwise. I have always thought it extreme impiety to repine at the evils of life." I. 51.

His amiable and sensible biographer says, (I. 64, note,) that he "always affirmed in conversation as well as in his writings, that both the Jewish and Christian dispensations were (when not perverted by the inventions of men) so remarkably favourable to human liberty, that there scarcely needed any other proofs of their divine origin."

He gave a signal proof of integrity in refusing to accept an appointment in Lord Howe's fleet, offered to him by his Lordship, when the American war broke out: he was on many accounts extremely anxious to be engaged in actual service, but believing the Americans to be right in

* The *Life and Correspondence of Major Cartwright*. Edited by his Niece, F. D. Cartwright. In 2 vols. 8vo. Colburn. 1826.

their resistance to England, his conscience forbade him to lift up his hand against them. His numerous pamphlets in favour of the Americans procured him an offer of command in the American navy; he told his American friends, however, that though he would never consent to bear arms against the liberties of America, he considered that nothing could absolve a man from the duty he owed his own country, and that he would stick by the old ship as long as there was a plank of her above water. I, 80, 81.

The American war, so base in its origin, so corrupt in its management, and so obstinately continued by the late King against the sense of the country, led Major Cartwright to see the supreme importance of parliamentary reform, and henceforward he devoted his talents, his property, his body and his soul to the cause of his country. Not in passion, not in spleen, but in soberness of mind, and under a solemn sense of Christian duty, he commenced and continued a Reformer. The following prayer was found amongst his papers at his decease, penned at the beginning of his career in the work of reform, and designed as a religious dedication of himself to the service of his country :

"Suffer, O Lord, this much-offending nation to be reclaimed from its guilt and recalled to a knowledge of the things which belong to its peace. It hath been equally regardless of thy law and its own liberty. It is hurrying to destruction, and knows not what it does. Give me and others, O Father of mercies, understanding and strength and zeal to stand in the gap between its offences and thy wrath; between its errors and its destruction; let our labours and anxieties, and let the prayers of all virtuous persons, plead in its behalf, and be thou entreated in its favour.

"Together with our usefulness let our humility increase; for with thee alone, O Lord, is all power and goodness. The wisdom of the wisest without thee is foolishness: the strength of the strongest is of no account; but those who are ordained to do thy will shall have power from above. Let my faith in Christ be imputed to me for righteousness, and let me be kept continually in mind of his spotless and laborious life while on earth, and of thine and his unspeakable affection for the whole race of men, and may he make intercession for me at thy throne!"

Miss Cartwright has properly inserted in the Life some letters of the Major's to a nephew, Captain Cartwright; at his entrance into life. We take a part of one of them, I. 267, 268 :—" I have understood that you have sometimes shewn an inclination to the Church. If you really have any serious thoughts of that profession, I wish you to examine well into the nature of the engagement. In order to this, it is necessary to scrutinize the Thirty-nine Articles, and to weigh well the creed you are to teach. If, on due consideration, you can truly and honestly subscribe to those articles, and to all the forms of prayer which arise out of them, you may most conscientiously undertake the ministry of the Church of England. But, if you cannot digest all this, it should seem there are difficulties in your way of more importance than you may have been aware of. To the unprincipled or the dissolute, who can make religion a trade, neither articles, nor creeds, nor subscriptions, will be any impediments : but I persuade myself that you will not make light of these things.—If you determine to enter into the priesthood, let it be of that church, or that sect, with whom you really agree in sentiment."

The life of this good man seems to have been modelled by his own maxim, (I. 194,)

" A man who is indifferent to the well-being of his fellow-creatures may be without trouble, but he must also be without virtue."

Occupied always in what he regarded as his public duty, and bearing right onwards towards the mark, the Major lived to the age of 84, preserving his faculties and his cheerfulness to the last. His sufferings were great, and he expressed his surprise that with a frame so exhausted he should find it so hard to die; but he frequently exclaimed in the most emphatic manner, " God's will be done."

When dying, he desired his niece to deliver the following message, remarkable for the calm spirit of wisdom which it breathes, and deserving of remembrance by all that are ambitious of the character of patriots :

" SAY TO ALL INQUIRING FRIENDS, THAT I HAVE NEVER CEASED TO ENTERTAIN THE MOST CONSOLATORY HOPES OF THE ULTIMATE ESTABLISHMENT OF CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY : BUT TO THIS END, THERE MUST BE VIRTUOUS INSTRUMENTS, WHICH, IT IS TO BE HOPED, THE TIMES WILL SUPPLY." II. 282.

Almost the last words he ever spoke were, on receiving a message from the Mexican minister that the liberty of

Mexico might be considered as established, "I am glad, I am very glad!" His voice soon after became nearly inaudible, but he was perfectly sensible to the last, and appeared absorbed in mental prayer. He died on the 23d of September, 1824.

In his religious opinions, his biographer says, II. 287, 288, he adhered to no particular "sect or party": with regard to *party* she is right, but with regard to *sect*, there is one to which all his enemies will consign him, and in which many of his admirers will claim him.

"His favourite authors on theological subjects were Clarke and Jortin.

"He read the Scriptures daily, and drew from them his own conclusions; what those conclusions were, may be seen by the following extracts from a paper which accompanied his will.

"Speaking of himself in the third person, he says, 'The legal doctrines of the state-church not satisfying his judgment, he sought for truth in the Bible, and in reason, equally the revelations of the Almighty.' The opinions in which he at length found rest and satisfaction were these:

"That God is I AM! the eternal! the self-existent! not powerful, but POWER; not wise, but WISDOM; not good, but GOODNESS. That he is one: a spirit without person; for in the idea of person who can exclude either form or limit? But what is the form of ubiquity? Where are the limits of infinity? From the eternity and existence of the Deity, his UNITY cannot be, even in idea, separated.

"That Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the chosen one, the highly favoured of God, the Saviour of men, and their appointed Judge.

"That the proper good and happiness of man is only to be found in piety to God, and virtue towards his fellow-creatures."

INTELLIGENCE.

New Unitarian Church at Salem, U. S., of America.*

MAY 5th, 1826, at eleven o'clock, the ceremony of laying the corner stone, of the new church of the First American Con-

* There is a Hymn on the opening of the Independent Congregational Church at Salem, in our last Volume, p. 224. Is this the same town? If so, has the congregation opened two Meeting-houses within a few months? Or, are there two Unitarian Churches in Salem? Ed.

gregational Society took place. The services were highly interesting. The Rev. Mr. Brazer made a most impressive and appropriate prayer, characterized by his peculiar felicity of thought and expression. An address, with which we are permitted to enrich our columns, was then delivered by the Rev. Mr. Upham. This beautiful performance will best speak for itself, although it will lose much of the force which was derived from the very eloquent manner in which it was delivered.

During the delivery of the address, a silver plate was deposited under the stone by the venerable Peter Lander, the oldest member of the society, the inscriptions on which were previously read by the venerable Timothy Pickering, one of the society. The corner stone was then laid and the address concluded. The benediction, by Mr. Upham, concluded the services.

A large concourse attended the ceremony, among whom were the venerable Dr. Holyoke, now almost 98 years of age, and Stephen Higginson, Jun., Esq., a lineal descendant of the first pastor.

The direct descendants of Gov. Endicott, and the pious and eloquent Higginson, the first pastor, are now members of this religious society.

Address delivered at the Laying of a Corner Stone of a new Meeting-House of the First Church in Salem.

MY CHRISTIAN FRIENDS AND BRETHREN,

We have assembled here to perform a service, simple in itself, but leading to associations which are dear to the heart, and sink deep into the mind. We are now to consecrate the foundation of a Christian Temple, and to place beneath this, its corner stone, a brief inscription to the great Almighty Being to whom we dedicate it. In performing this service we do not only follow a custom prevalent among us, but we do what is recognised to be a duty and is prompted by our feelings.

That is our duty, we are convinced by the consideration of a single circumstance. When the venerable building which last stood on this consecrated spot was removed, with what solicitous curiosity did we examine its foundation, in the desire of discovering some inscription placed there by men who lived four generations before us, concealed for more than a century from all eyes until ours should fall upon it! Our hope did not wholly leave us until the last corner had been taken away, and the disappointment which we then suffered is still fresh in our minds. We will spare those of our remote posterity, to whose lot it may fall to remove this foundation, a similar disappointment. We will endeavour to secure to them the gratification for which we have been seeking in vain.

With these views we proceed to deposit beneath this corner stone, where the light of the day will never reach it until it shines upon the demolished and scattered ruins of these solid

walls, the plate upon which are engraven the inscription and notices which will now be read to you.

[Here Col. Pickering read the inscription on the Plate; the following words are engraven on one side of it:—

“To the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our God and the God of our Fathers, the Descendants of Higginson, Endicott, and the other New England Pilgrims, who here gathered the first American Congregational Church, Aug. 6th, A. D. 1629, have laid this Corner Stone of the Fourth Edifice erected on this spot, for Christian Worship, April 27th, A. D. 1826, under the ministry of the Rev. John Prince, I.L. D., and Rev. Charles W. Upham, Associate Pastors. *‘Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.’*”]

When, after the succession, as we trust and pray, of many generations, our distant descendants in removing this temple, time-worn and dilapidated as it then will be, shall find this memorial of our interest in them, their minds and hearts will instantly come back to us through the long interval, perhaps of centuries; they will bless our memory for having raised the altar around which their Fathers had gathered, and spread out the roof beneath which they had been sheltered in worship; and when they reflect that four edifices of wood and one of more durable materials have risen successively, and successively sunk into ruin on the same spot, but that the Gospel has been constantly preached there, they will fully recognize the sublime truth contained in that prophetic declaration of our Saviour which we have inscribed here, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”

We now, in the sight of God, and in the presence of all who are here assembled, devote the building, upon the foundation of which we are standing, to the accommodation and support of a community of Christian worshipers. We bid these walls to rise in the name of Higginson, Endicott, and all our honoured and pious ancestors, the Pilgrims of New England, who here first consecrated a Christian Sanctuary on the borders of a rude ocean and a still ruder wilderness. We bid them rise in the name of that glorious company of saints and martyrs, who, in every age of the church, have toiled, and suffered, and died in the holy cause of Christian truth and Christian liberty. We bid them rise in the blessed name of him who is the great head of the church.

And it is our devout and fervent prayer, that on this spot for ages yet to come, the eternal and immutable principles of sacred truth and of religious duty may be proclaimed—that the cause of free but sober inquiry, and of pure, and rational, and soul-redeeming Christianity, such Christianity as allures the convictions of the understanding as well as the feelings of the heart, may for ever be cherished and defended here—that the poor and the desolate and sorrow-stricken may here always find peace and comfort to their souls—that a light from heaven may break

through the clouds which cast their gloomy shadows over this scene of our existence, and shine down upon those who may successively come up here to catch a glimpse of that better world towards which God in his mercy is calling us. Here may affliction always be soothed—here may a lasting consolation be extended to the bereaved—here may a heavenly hope ever spring up in the bosoms of the desponding—here may a bright pathway from the spot where we stand, to the world above, be for ever kept open, along which, as in the dream of the Patriarch, pious spirits will be mounting upwards, and gracious influences passing down. And when the great shepherd shall collect into one fold in heaven his scattered flocks, may there be a long, and innumerable, and a shining train of saved and rejoicing spirits, clad in garments of light, with crowns on their heads, who will look back to the spot and to the temple which is now rising, and exclaim, “thou art blessed forever; for to us thou hast been the gate of Heaven.”

Deaths of Thomas Jefferson and John Adams.

By an extraordinary coincidence these two extraordinary men died on the same day, that day July 4th, the anniversary of American Independence and the Jubilee or 50th year anniversary. Both had been engaged in the drawing up of the Declaration of Independence; both had been in diplomatic capacities in the service of their country; and both had been Presidents of the Republic. The funerals of both were public and honourable to the American Character.

FUNERAL OF JEFFERSON.

(From the *Richmond Enquirer*, July, 14.)

The proceedings of Tuesday last furnished the strongest tribute which could have been offered to the memory of illustrious Jefferson. The soldiers of the Revolution, the Ministers of Religion, the officers of the Federal and State Governments, citizens, military and soldiers, the teachers and their pupils; all descriptions of people, united in “doing honour to the man who had filled up the measure of his country’s honour.” The exhibition was the spontaneous offering of a free people to their distinguished benefactor. It was a brilliant illustration of the purity and beauty of our political institutions. There was no compulsion; no adulation; no sacrifice at the shrine of a deceased despot; no humiliating effort to propitiate his “legitimate successor.” It was the “unbought offering” of an independent people. The hearts of freemen poured themselves forth in paying the last tribute of respect to the ashes of their benefactor. The unbidden tear was shed in the fulness of gratitude to one of the most distinguished fathers of the Republic. Compare such an affecting and simple scene as this, with all the splendid pa-

geantry, with all the "mockery of woe" which surrounds the bier of a monarch or a conqueror, and how completely does the latter dwindle into insignificance!

Notwithstanding the shortness of the period which had been allotted for the exhibition, all the arrangements were complete. The orator, and the ministers of religion, were prepared for their various exercises; and the awning, which had been commenced on the Capitol Square on Monday morning only, was completed by 10 o'clock on Tuesday. A canvas covering had been spread over the large Lafayette arch to the east of the Capitol, and wings thrown off to the right and left, and in front, sufficient to accommodate an immense multitude. In the rear of the arch a light platform was erected, canopied with crape, for the reception of the orator and the ministers of religion.

The day was uncommonly pleasant. At half after 10 o'clock, the procession began to move from the Henrico Court-House, according to the order which had been published by the Committee of Arrangements. A detachment of the Light Infantry Blues with music—then the members of the Executive Council—Ministers of religion—the soldiers of the Revolution—the officers of Government—Judges and officers of the Federal and State Judiciaries—Committee of Arrangement—Municipal Authorities of the City—Justices of Henrico county—Debating Societies—Teachers with their Schools—Citizens, Strangers, and Uniform Companies.

The lengthened procession, four deep, extended from the Union Hotel to the United States' Bank. The whole march through the different streets which had been designated was conducted with the utmost possible order. A few minutes before 12 o'clock, the procession entered at the Eastern Gate of the Capitol Square. At this point of time the scene was exquisitely beautiful and impressive. It pleased the eye of taste, whilst it delighted the soul of the patriot. The whole area under the awning was filled by a numerous assemblage of ladies and gentlemen. The military, and many citizens who were unable to obtain seats, were stationed around. All was order, and a solemn silence reigned through an assembly estimated to contain at least 5,000 persons.

The exercises were commenced with music: Bishop Moore, of the Episcopal Church, then put up the following prayer:—

"Almighty and Eternal God, the Creator of all things, and Judge of all men! Whose glory the heaven of heavens cannot contain—whose delight is among the children of men; and whose tender mercy is over all thy works. Look down, we beseech thee, in indulgent goodness upon us, thy unworthy servants, and while we confess our obligations to thee, for the numerous blessings we enjoy, be thou pleased to impress our hearts with such a sense of gratitude that we may be ashamed to offend thee. May we shew forth thy praise, most merciful

God, not only with our lips, but in the language, the expressive language of holy and virtuous lives.

"We thank thee, heavenly Father, for the civil and religious blessings with which as a nation thou hast favoured us—for that form of government which secures to us liberty without licentiousness; and protects us in the enjoyment of the sacred rights of conscience.

"We invoke thy blessing, oh merciful God! upon all our rulers. Direct them, we beseech thee, by thy counsel—save them from the unhallowed influence of prejudice, and may all their proceedings be such as thou wilt approve and bless. Inspire the minds of the people with a spirit of due subordination to the laws of our favoured country. May we always bear in mind that our rulers have difficulties peculiar to the stations they occupy; and may those difficulties inseparable from their office, influence us to supplicate God in their behalf, and produce in our minds a spirit of indulgence towards them.

"In particular, we commend to thy care and protection the President of these United States. Teach him, oh, teach him, most gracious God, to consider himself the Father of the nation over which he has been called to preside. May the interest of the whole American family form the object of his paternal regard—the subject of his continual prayer and supplication. May no sectional partialities lead him astray from the path of official duty. May no sectional jealousies take possession of his mind, or the minds of the people committed to his charge, and may that happiness we have heretofore enjoyed be continued to our latest posterity.

"Bless, we beseech thee, the Governor and Magistracy of this state. Direct them in all their doings with thy most gracious favour, and further them with thy continual help. Grant that they may prove themselves the nursing fathers of thy church and people. May the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ be precious to their hearts, and may they enjoy the consolation flowing from the gospel of thy dear Son.

"Peculiar, blessed God! are those circumstances which at this time engage our attention. Be thou pleased to impress our hearts with that solemnity becoming the occasion; and while we are dwelling in reflection upon the memory of those whose removal from the vale of tears has excited the noblest sensibilities of our natures, may we remember thee as the Author of those blessings secured to us by their labours: and reverence them as the honoured instruments of thy favoured loving-kindness towards us. Oh raise, thou God of love, raise up from among us other patriots, whose bosoms may burn with holy ardour in the cause of liberty and virtue, who may defend that government which has been sanctioned with thy blessing, which has rendered us victorious in war, and prosperous in peace. We thank thee that thou didst spare those ven-

erable patriots to witness the jubilee of our nation, and upon that jubilee didst call them hence. Look in mercy, we beseech thee, gracious God, upon their bereaved families; place beneath them the everlasting arms of thy love; may they find a shelter in every American heart; never leave them nor forsake them for a moment; and at last, oh take them, blessed Jesus, to a better world. We ask these blessings, thou God of love, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

After another strain of solemn music, Mr. Tyler, the Governor of the Commonwealth, arose and delivered an eloquent address.

As soon as the orator had concluded, the band struck up a fine dirge, after which the Rev. Mr. Kerr, of the Baptist Church, closed the exercises of the day with prayer.

The whole scene was of too impressive a character ever to be forgotten. It was worthy of the great and good man whose loss it was intended to commemorate.

Minute guns were fired for one hour in the morning, and one hour in the evening; and the State-house and Penitentiary bells were tolled through the whole day.

Portugal and Spain.

THE death of the King of PORTUGAL has opened the way for great improvements in that country. The Emperor of the Brazils has generously, and we think wisely, relinquished the sovereignty, which came to him by inheritance, together with that of its Asiatic and African Dependencies. Through his influence a free constitution is established in Portugal, the Cortes being re-established with powers similar to our Parliament. One article of the constitution shews however the slow progress of Toleration: the Roman Catholic Religion is to be the Established one, but all others are allowed to *Foreigners*, provided always that there is to be *no exterior form of temple!*

SPAIN presents a melancholy contrast to Portugal; and is in fact endeavouring to stir up priests and priest-ridden nobles and soldiers against the new order of things in that country. The restoration of the Bourbons brought back to Spain many of her favourite practices: one of the latest of these that has been revived is an *auto da fé*, or the burning of a human being for heresy. At Valencia this foul crime has been lately committed at the instance of the Priesthood. The victim is said to have been eminent for his morals, and especially his charities. So much the worse, according to the "orthodox" of all ages and places, if he had not the true faith. How much longer will Spain be the reproach of Europe and of Christendom!

THE
Christian Reformer.

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American Unitarianism.

To liberal and enlightened theologians, every thing connected with the religion of America is interesting. In England, the mind is fettered by an overpowering establishment; in America, its operations are unshackled, and are in consequence quick and true. I have been lately perusing a series of American Unitarian newspapers, from which I have culled a few articles of intelligence which may perhaps be deemed worthy of a place in the pages of the Christian Reformer. The newspaper in question is entitled the "Christian Register." It is published weekly in Boston, by the American Unitarian Association. Its circulation amounts to about 1000. Its pages are devoted in part to the passing occurrences of the day, more particularly to religious intelligence,—to biography of eminent Unitarians,—to extracts from and reviews of liberal theological publications,—and general correspondence. The first six numbers comprise memoirs of Wakefield, Lindsey, Priestley, Emlyn, and Rammohun Roy; copious notices of Milton's new work, various articles of review, interesting sketches of English Unitarianism, furnished by a gentleman travelling in this country, &c. &c.

The following notices of a newly-formed sect are pleasing proofs of the certain progress of rational Christianity, wherever the human mind is left to its own honest operations:

"New Church in Summer Street.—The dedication of a new chapel or church at the bottom of Summer Street, in this city, by the society denominated Christians, has excited inquiry as to the origin, principles and members of this new sect. They are sometimes confounded with the Free-will Baptists, because of their free communion and baptizing by immersion only, and they are vulgarly called Christians. They claim to be called Christians in the common pronunciation of the word. This people, or connexion as they term it, originated in the year 1794, and societies *existed in different places* in the United States, *unknown to each other*, for several years. Each church is

independent; the connexion has a yearly conference; they have no creed except the Scriptures; their preachers generally deliver extemporaneous sermons; the majority of the societies abjure the doctrines of the Trinity and of Calvin."—*January 7, 1826.*

From the paper of the following week it appears, that their preaching is conducted by an *elder* chosen by themselves. Elder *Morgridge* was invited to preach for one year. The dedication sermon was preached by Elder Clough, of New York, and it is characterized as "an able defence of Christian liberty." The sermon is subsequently noticed in the review department. "We have read this discourse with great pleasure, and can speak of it with unqualified approbation. Mr. Clough shews himself to be an ardent friend and bold assertor of religious liberty. It is delightful to hear the notes of freedom and right poured forth with energy. They need to be sounded at the present time, and in our land, for spiritual tyranny was never more busy in its attempts to intrude the people. We are glad this voice has come from the midst of the people; we rejoice that the poor have taken to themselves the name of Christians, and disclaimed the authority of the church and its ministers in determining what they shall believe or what name they shall bear." The extracts which follow are interesting, and fully justify the encomiums of the reviewer.

"We have been liberal of our extracts because we have found nothing that affords so full and favourable a view of the principles of the '*Christians*' as this discourse. The sect is gaining adherents, and it is desirable that we should understand its character. As far as we can judge, its members are simple and avowed Unitarians, the progress of whose opinions amongst the lower classes of the community will do very much towards dispelling ignorance, fanaticism and false religion. Our readers will be able to judge for themselves from the statement which Mr. Clough gives of what he and his friends consider '*the first principles of the Gospel.*' 1. The doctrine of one God. 2. That this one God is the benevolent Father and righteous Governor of the whole human family. 3. That all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. 4. That Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah, the Mediator between God and men, and the Saviour of sinners. 5. That God, by his holy spirit, exercises a moral influence

upon the hearts of men in reclaiming them from vice. 6. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. 7. The free forgiveness of sins, on the ground of the rich mercy of God. 8. The necessity of repentance towards God. 9. Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. 10. The necessity of holiness of heart and purity of life. 11. The doctrine of a future state of immortality. 12. That God is no respecter of persons, and that he will render to every man according to his works."—*Christian Register*, February 11, 1826.

Thus, with the exception perhaps of the 5th article, [though this admits of an explanation which would make it unobjectionable,] is a fair representation of the prevalent opinions amongst English as well as American Unitarians.

The leading article of the number for January 21, is devoted to the American Unitarian Association, for which it pleads with considerable earnestness. Amongst other plans for increasing the revenues of the society, it is suggested that "*ladies* may give their assistance by making their pastors life members. Such aid will be acknowledged in the *Christian Register* whenever it is desired." The hint seems to have been taken, for in the *Register* of February 18, "the Treasurer of the *American Unitarian Association* acknowledges the receipt of thirty dollars from the *ladies of the New South Society* to constitute their pastor, the Rev. Alexander Young, a life member."

Surely the fair ones of Great Britain will not be exceeded in zeal and generosity by their Transatlantic sisters! Ten guineas will be a very slight tax on the ladies of our more respectable congregations, and will be as handsome a compliment to a minister as either a gown or a piece of plate, and it will confer a privilege that will cease only with *life*. The *Christian Reformer* will, I trust, be often called on to register the generosity of the Unitarian ladies in this respect.

The advertisements frequently remind one of a very different state of manners and feelings from that to which we are accustomed in England. Thus a theological circulating library and reading-room, as advertised in Boston, would receive but little support in our cities and towns. This scheme is one of the many good effects of the American Unitarian Association. I observe, that amongst other theological attractions, the *Monthly Repository* and *Chris-*

tian Reformer are specially mentioned. In a subsequent number the librarian inserts an advertisement of inquiry after two numbers of the Repository and three of the Reformer, which were lost sight of. In England, an advertiser would have the privilege of paying more for a single line than the cost price of four numbers of the Repository.

B.

[To be continued occasionally.]

Mr. Gilman's Sermon, at Charleston, on John i. 1 & 14.

[We have received from the author, and lay before our readers, the following admirable discourse on a difficult passage of scripture. It was published by the Charleston Unitarian Tract Society, last year. We shall give the explanatory or doctrinal part in this number and the practical in the next. Ed.]

John, chap. i. ver. 1, and part of ver. 14 :

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.—And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

The leading object of St. John was to trace the Gospel, or the religion of Jesus Christ, to the true cause, viz. the power and wisdom of God. He appears anxious to guard his readers against all suspicion of its earthly or human origin. And well he might. Because any system of religion, devised by the contrivance and founded on the authority of *man alone*, could possess no intrinsic claims on the attention, the obedience, and the reverence of the world.

Such, it is allowed on all hands, was the principal object of the words selected for our text, and indeed of the whole introduction to the Gospel of St. John. To the mind of every reader, whatever be his peculiar views and interpretations of it, the passage must certainly appear strikingly sublime and impressive. Unhappily, however, considerable differences exist with respect to its true and precise meaning. If all cannot understand it in the same point of view, mutual charity should be exercised towards the interpretations of different parties, and the reasonings on which they are founded.

One interpretation which has prevailed, and still widely prevails in the Christian world, is, that *The Word*, of

which St. John speaks in the text, is intended by him as the proper name of a distinct person. Others, who profess also to be Christians, consider *The Word* to represent a certain quality or property of the Deity, and not a separate or intelligent agent. This latter mode of understanding the text is embraced widely, but not universally, by the class of Christians to whom the regular and accustomed worshippers in this church belong.*

It will be the object of the following discourse, first, To attempt a candid and temperate discussion of some of the principal interpretations which have at various times been given of the text; secondly, To demonstrate, that these differences of interpretation may really agree in all that is of importance to religion; and, thirdly, To present to you a few of such reflections and lessons as may naturally arise from a consideration of the whole subject.

Grant, oh thou Spirit of Holiness, that these our studies and meditations may be prosecuted at this time with a sincere love of truth, a kind regard for the motives of our fellow-men, and an earnest desire to promote thy glory and our own eternal welfare, through Jesus Christ thy Son.

First, let us attempt a candid and temperate discussion of some of the leading interpretations which have been given of the text. The most prominent is that to which allusion has already been made, viz. that the Word spoken of in the beginning of John, is a separate and intelligent person, infinite in power and wisdom, equal to the Father, distinct from the Father, yet one with the Father, and also one and the same with Him whom the Scriptures call the man Christ Jesus,† whose history is given us in the records of the New Testament. The advocates of this representation, I believe, almost universally allow, that it is on its very face inconsistent with reason; but that it must be believed, although we do not understand it, and although it violates some of the most common forms of language which convey ideas from man to man.

I have not intentionally misrepresented this doctrine. I have borrowed the language used in books and discourses on the side of the question to which it belongs, and indeed

* This Sermon was preached in the Second Independent Church, Charleston.

† 1 Tim. ii. 5.

I do not fear in the least but that every one of my hearers at all conversant with the subject, will have recognized the statement to have been full, fair and exact.

Let us now listen with due attention to the principal considerations used in defence of it. For it must be acknowledged that they are such as ought to possess great weight with those who profess to be guided by the Scriptures.

The strongest argument then, is this: Look, say the advocates of this doctrine, at the plain language of the first verse in John. What can be clearer, what can be more explicit, than the naked statement itself in the very terms of Scripture? *The Word was God.* How, they ask, can any, who pretend to receive the Bible, after this, deny the possession both of deity and personality to what John calls *the Word*?

You see that I have stated the argument in its very strongest light, and I do not wonder that its advocates confidently bring it forward, and charge us home with its whole force. But, after allowing and stating all this, I think I may humbly claim to be heard with equal attention and equal deference on the other side.

I hold it then to be a right rule of Scripture criticism, when a text occurs, which in its literal sense contradicts our understanding, to search and examine as diligently as we possibly can, for some meaning which may satisfy our reason, and still be consistent with the rest of the Bible. If two meanings are assigned to any scriptural passage, one mysterious and another clear, I wish to know by what law of God or man I am required to adopt the mysterious in preference to the clear. The Roman Catholic asks us, what can be more plain and explicit than the assertion of Jesus, *This bread is my body.* Now, if I am to take every expression in its first and literal sense, I know not how I can escape admitting that the bread which Jesus brake, was literally and truly his own body. But, on a moment's reflection, I perceive that that could not be the meaning of Scripture. Why not? Because, as my respected opponents, who are Protestants, will themselves say, it violates the plainest dictates of the understanding. Exactly so! Here then they have stepped over on my own ground. When we look at the sentence, *The Word was with God,* and *the Word was God,* who is not ready to pronounce that this is an absolute contradiction, or at least a plain

solecism in terms? We never say in common life, unless indeed we happen to be speaking figuratively, and we never, in other parts of Scripture, find it said, that one thing is *with* another, and yet that the first thing is the same as the second. The very term *with*, in the mind of every one who uses it, intrinsically implies an idea of distinction, separation, and want of identity.

Here then we are one moment at a stand. Which way shall we proceed? How interpret the sentence before us? "Take it," says the conscientious Trinitarian, "just as it stands, with all its mystery, all its difficulty, all its opposition to the common uses of language and of reason, and inquire no farther." "Not so," says the thoughtless Infidel. "Reject the whole thing at once. Laugh at such a heterogeneous mass of incomprehensible nonsense, and close the Bible for ever, which presents language to view that shocks and staggers the mind." Suppose we decline to take either of these diametrically opposite extremes. Suppose we make this text the subject of our attention; does it argue any want of reverence for the Bible, if we put forth our studious and faithful efforts to try to give it a meaning consistent with our reason, and the other portions of the Scripture?

In the foregoing train of reflection, my friends, I have endeavoured fairly to describe the progress by which the conscientious Unitarian finds himself on the ground he has assumed. I beg that it may be considered as applicable, not only to the passage before us, but also to the whole Bible. We only wish to understand and interpret that precious and sacred book on principles of criticism which, if stated without any reference to previous doctrines or prejudices, every man would cheerfully allow.

To return now to the passage before us. It is not to be expected or demanded that all Unitarians should precisely agree together in their explanations of every difficult scriptural text. If their interpretations are not inconsistent with their own leading doctrine, nor with the general tone of Scripture, and come with clearness and satisfaction to their own minds, it is all they ever ask of God to give them—it is all they ever require of each other. I therefore frankly inform you, that there are many modes among them of explaining the introductory passage of St. John's Gospel. There are two principal ones, however, which attract by far the greatest number of followers, and which

you may be interested in hearing described. The sentiments of the preacher accord at present with the *second* to be laid before you, in the defence of which some little pains will be taken. It is proper, however, first to state the explanation which is adopted by Mr. Belsham, who, in this point, accords with the Polish Socinians, with Hopton Haynes, the friend of Sir Isaac Newton, with the late excellent Mr. Cappe, with Mr. Simpson in his Essays, with Dr. Carpenter, one of the most eminent of living English Unitarians, and with the authors of the Improved Version of the New Testament. The leading points in the explanation of all these interpreters are as follow : *

The phrase *In the beginning* they refer, not to the beginning of the world, but to the beginning of the Gospel dispensation. Their reasons for this, which are strong and supported by some Scripture analogies, I cannot now stop to consider. The appellation, *The Word*, they regard as an expressive proper name of Jesus Christ, signifying his office of instructor, and teacher of truth and life. When we are told, that he was in the beginning with God, they think it means that before he appeared in public, from the very commencement of his ministry, he had intercourse with God, and was called and qualified by him for his high and important office. Then, when it is said, that the word was God, or as they translate it according to grammatical rules, was a God, these interpreters, in order to avoid the palpable contradiction in terms before alluded to, and particularly to reconcile the passage with those numerous places where Jesus describes himself as distinct from, inferior to, and dependent on the Father, understand St. John as calling Jesus a God in a somewhat similar sense to that in which the prophets were called gods by our Saviour himself †—and in which Moses was called a god to Pharaoh by Jehovah—and in which magistrates and persons of high authority were called *gods* in the 82d Psalm, ver. 1, and five or six other places in the Bible. When all things are said to be *made* by the word, &c., they translate the original by the term *done* instead of *made*, against which no grammatical objection can be raised. With this alteration, they paraphrase the 3d verse thus: Every thing relating to the introduction of the new dispensation has been accomplished either by Jesus himself, or by his apostles and mes-

* See Belsham's "Calm Inquiry," p. 18, &c.

† John x. 35.

sengers, who derived their commission and powers from him, and who performed nothing without his express warrant and authority. Where our common translation of the Bible says that the word was made flesh, they insist, and that too upon very strong grounds, that the passage should read, the word *was* flesh, wherein they strenuously contend, that the divinity of Christ, so far from being maintained, is expressly and positively denied. Thus much for this scheme of interpretation, which, whatever may be said of it, certainly involves no inconsistencies, no self-contradictions, no statements revolting to reason, and is moreover fortified by its defenders with several scriptural passages.

I shall now venture with due deference to propose another explanation of this long-contested passage, which, after many an hour of anxious, religious and intense reflection, I have adopted, in some considerable points of view, conformably to the opinions of the truly great and celebrated Grotius, Lardner, Lindsey, who, in compliance with his conscience, resigned his preferments in the Church of England, Dr. Priestley, and most of the modern Unitarians.*

My first remark is this, that had St. John intended to begin his Gospel by informing his readers that Jesus Christ was truly God, he would probably have told us so in plain and clear terms and not involved his meaning in a cloud of figurative obscurity.

I would observe, secondly, that the great object of this treatise of St. John is evidently to give an account of the establishment of the religion of Jesus. When he commences it, therefore, what so natural as to remind us immediately of its heavenly origin, and to describe the state of the world before the Gospel dispensation, and the need there was of a new revelation from heaven? Accordingly, the first five verses appear to me to be devoted to this purpose. In the beginning, he tells us, *was the Word*; that is, as I understand it along with most of the interpreters just now enumerated, In the beginning of all things, a vast creating *power and wisdom* were put into exercise. The *word* is evidently the *command* by which God creates all things. Moses represents God as only *saying*, Let there be light, and there *was* light. And the Psalmist tells us,

* See Belsham's "Calm Inquiry," p. 15, 2d Ed.

the heavens were made by the *word* of God, which manifestly signifies nothing more than that the command, will, or power of God, brought the heavens into being. Surely no separate power or agent needs be here supposed; and when John goes on to tell us, that the word was *with* God, he means, as I understand him, to assert, that the power and wisdom exerted in creation were not spontaneous, did not act by chance, but were *with* God, or with a great first cause, i. e. he means to overthrow and sweep away by this little sentence, the whole fabric of atheism. What then does he mean by saying immediately, that the *Word was* God? Clearly, he intends to guard his reader against supposing that this word, this property, this acting energy of God, was a separate agent from God himself. Because, it is not possible, in the nature of things, that power, wisdom, command, or word, should exist of themselves, or separately from the being who puts them forth.* He therefore assures us that he means by the Word nothing more than the one Jehovah himself, acting by his power and wisdom. Thus then, in this far-famed, this much boasted little sentence, which has been so often and so triumphantly brought forward as an irrefragable proof of the doctrine of the Trinity; I conscientiously see nothing but an absolute assertion of the strict and indivisible Unity of God.

In order to show you that I have not strained this point of language in the least, I will illustrate my view of this first verse, by a similar sentence on a far humbler theme, but of which I trust every one will perceive the force and propriety of the resemblance. Suppose, then, I should say, In the beginning of the American revolution there was a hope for our country, and that hope was *with* Washington, and that hope *was* Washington. Would it not savour somewhat of a mere word-catching spirit, to pretend to understand two persons as united here in the one man Washington, or that could make the *hope* of our country a

* It is remarkable that the closest analytical reasoner of modern times, in his profound discussions on Cause and Effect, should, after long and elaborate trains of novel ratiocination, arrive at a conclusion precisely coinciding with the above proposition of St. John. "The Word was God," says the Evangelist. "The power of God," says Dr. Brown, "is not any thing different from God." This acutely discovered truth at once confirms and illustrates the explanations in the present discourse.

distinct and different agent from Washington? Or, suppose a powerful monarch should command a splendid palace to be erected. Usage would justify one in saying figuratively, "It was a *word* that made this beautiful fabric," though, to guard against misconception, he would immediately perhaps say, "By the *word*, I mean only the monarch himself." I see no defect in the argument which applies these two illustrations to the first verse in John.

To proceed. If you look along through the next four verses, you will find, first, that "all things were made" by this Word, this power and wisdom of God, and that "nothing was made without it;" every Greek scholar, of whatever persuasion, being willing to allow me to render the original by the word *it* instead of *him*; you will find, secondly, that in *it*, as St. John says, "was life;" all very clear; and moreover that "the life was the light of men;" i. e. that the world at large had no other light to illumine and guide them but what they received along with their natural life; then, the next verse, "the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not," requires scarcely any commentary, since it so exactly describes the state of the world previous to, and without the Gospel of Jesus. And then, see how verse sixth comes in and tallies with the foregoing remarks in the order of a well-continued narrative—"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John." It was right and fitting, that in a history of the Gospel, John the Baptist, the forerunner and preparer of that Gospel, should be mentioned *before* Jesus, who actually succeeded him in his great ministration. *I do not see that the slightest mention, either figurative, or literal, or typical, or allusive, is made to Jesus in the first five verses of this Gospel.* It was not necessary that such mention should be made, it was not a part of the writer's business to do it, and no one would ever have thought of discovering such an idea there, but for a reason which I shall presently examine and dispose of.

In the mean time, it will be demanded, how I would explain, on the foregoing principles, the 14th verse, a fragment of which I have selected as part of the text. *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.* By this I understand that the very same power and wisdom which were operative in the creation of the world, were implanted in the infant, or rather the embryo frame of Jesus, the son of Mary; that his whole nature and character were

miraculous: that he spake and taught with superhuman wisdom, that he acted with superhuman power, that, in short, he planted a religion in the world which derives its origin, its strength, its excellence, from the mighty hand of God.

How then, it may be asked, is the idea so prevalent in the world, that the Word spoken of in the 1st chapter of John's Gospel, is a separate person, rather than a quality or energy of the supreme Jehovah? It is owing, I believe, mainly, to a verse in the first Epistle of John, as it stands in our common Bibles. For no one can pretend that in any other part of the Scripture is Jesus designated by the name Word. In the 19th chapter of Revelation, it is true, a certain terrific and allegorical personage has a name given him, The Word of God. But it is doubtful whether this is meant to be applied to Jesus. If it is, it matters not to our present argument. Because he might have had that name given him, as an expressive appellation, in the same manner as Jeremiah calls Jerusalem, The Lord our Righteousness, ch. xxxiii. 16. The verse, however, which has contributed most largely to the opinion I have been opposing in this discourse, is in the 5th chapter of the 1st Epistle of John, 7th verse: "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." This verse is sometimes confidently brought forward to prove, that the Word spoken of in the beginning of John's Gospel is Jesus, the second person of the Trinity. But the plain truth is, this verse belongs not to the Bible. A large majority of the religious world, who have examined the subject, declare it to be an unauthorized addition to the Epistle of John. It is found in no Greek manuscript, ancient or modern, except one, which is of a very late date, and of no authority. It was never quoted in any of the ancient controversies on the Trinity, though the words immediately contiguous, both before and after, are often found cited. The following Trinitarian writers pronounce it indisputably spurious. The authors of the Eclectic Review, which is the chief Calvinistic periodical publication in England; the learned Griesbach, who has done so much to restore the purity of the text of the New Testament; Bishop Lowth, who denies the use of understanding to the man who defends this verse; Dr. Middleton, who lately wrote a very learned work in favour of the Trinity, but who says, that learned

and good men are now for the most part agreed in the rejection of this controverted passage; Mr. Wardlaw, a late zealous and eloquent defender of the doctrine of the Trinity, in Scotland; Charles Butler, Esq., one of the most erudite Roman Catholics of modern times; the Bishop of Lincoln, who, in his *Elements of Christian Theology*, says, "I am convinced that it is spurious; Luther, the great Evangelical Reformer, who rejected this verse from his translation of the New Testament, and whose dying request was that his translation should not be altered; Bishop Marsh; Archbishop Newcome; Porson, the unrivalled Greek scholar; the distinguished Methodist, Dr. Adam Clarke; the Quarterly Reviewers, the champions of the English Church; and Professor Stuart, the great American Theologian. I do not mention the names of Sir Isaac Newton, and other Unitarians, because I am willing to leave the whole matter to the point where it is now brought.

[To be concluded in the next Number.]

Vice and Misery: a Tale of Woe.

THE following story is from the *Times* newspaper of the 26th of September. As it is the report of a Coroner's Inquest, no doubt can be entertained of its truth. We insert it as another awful lesson from real life that *the way of transgressors is hard*. Could it be made known to young females generally in the humbler ranks of life, they would surely shut their ears to the seductive flatteries and lying promises of unprincipled men. Here is a victim to what is called, in the outset, pleasure! A dreadful responsibility is upon the head of him, be he who he may, who brought ruin upon her character: and let young men reflect that whenever they tempt a female from the path of chastity, they incur the fearful risk of bringing her into the condition of misery to which this unhappy young creature was reduced by vice, and of precipitating her into the same untimely, unhonoured grave; into which too the grey hairs of a doubly bereaved parent may be dragged down! The seducer, with all his gaiety, may be no better in the eye of God and man than a murderer. He destroys innocence, without which life may be but a precarious good, and he may eventually put an end to life itself, and to more lives than that of his immediate victim. False delicacy must

not restrain those that have access to the public ear from proclaiming these melancholy, but, if they are duly heeded, salutary truths.

An Inquisition was taken before Thomas Higgs, Esq., at the Green Man, Little George Street, Westminster, to inquire into the death of ELLEN BRIGGS, commonly known as "Fair Ellen," an unfortunate female apparently about 19 years of age, who once possessed very attractive features; indeed, the remains of beauty appeared evident to the Jury on viewing the body. Elizabeth Wetherall deposed, "I knew the deceased, but had not seen her lately, until last Wednesday morning, when I found her sitting on the step of a door in Great Peter Street. She was miserably clad, and looked greatly emaciated. She told me in a faint voice, that she had not tasted food for three days, and had been turned out of her lodgings, kept by a man named Wilson: she had ever since wandered about the streets, sleeping at night on the steps of doors. I could not bear to see her starving situation, and invited her to my lodgings in Perkin's Rents. I assisted her to walk there, as she was scarcely able to support herself, and gave her some breakfast, which she partook of eagerly. I then asked her to lie down on my bed, she replied, 'Indeed I will, and thank you too;' and I helped her into bed. Thinking she required more nourishing food, I pledged my shawl and stockings to procure her some broth and port wine, which seemed to revive her." (The witness from the first, appeared to be labouring under some agitation, fearing she would be blamed by the parish; but the Coroner and Jury kindly assured her that she need not be in the least apprehensive of getting into trouble, for every one must admire her generous conduct to the forlorn and unfortunate girl.) "She was with me three days and nights. I wished her to go to the workhouse, where she would be more properly attended to, and I offered to go for a chair to take her there; but she said, 'Do let me stay another day,' and then begged to have a Bible brought her. She pointed out a chapter, and asked me to read it to her, which I did. The deceased entreated me to come to bed, and lie by her side, which I was about to do, when she expired. I had not the least suspicion she was so near dying. There were some marks on the body caused by her lying on the steps." The Coroner here observed to witness, that her disinterested conduct reflected the highest honour upon her, and the Jury instantly subscribed a small sum of money for the girl, which was presented to her by the Coroner. The mother of the unfortunate girl at that very instant arrived from Manchester to see her daughter, quite unconscious of her illness. The fatigue of travelling so far, joined with the sudden shock her feelings received on hearing the lamentable event, so far overpowered her, that she rushed into the room, threw herself down in a paroxysm of grief, and implored the Coroner to let her see her

dear Ellen. The scene became so distressing, that she was at length obliged to be carried out of the room. Several witnesses now corroborated the statements of the first witness, and the Jury returned a verdict of "Died by the visitation of God."

The Apostle Paul an Unitarian; or, View of the Evidence, found in the Apostle's Writings and Discourses, in favour of the Unitarian Doctrine.

[We copy this valuable table of Evidences from a Sermon, bearing the first of the above titles, by BENJAMIN MARDON, M. A. The Sermon is an explanation of Philipp. ii. 6—11, which is judiciously and satisfactorily treated; but contains also much other interesting matter, and we sincerely recommend it to our readers. The notes, of which our extract is part, are instructive and in some respects curious. Ed.]

1. Only one God; 1 Cor. viii. 4; 1 Tim. i. 17.
2. God is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; 2 Cor. i. 3, xi. 31; Eph. i. 3.
3. The Father is the only God; Rom. xiv. 27; 1 Cor. viii. 6; Eph. i. 17, iv. 5, v. 20; 1 Tim. i. 17.
4. The Father is the only object of supreme adoration; Rom. xv. 6, 30; Phil. iii. 3.
5. Paul worshiped the Father only; Eph. iii. 15, 20, 21; Phil. i. 3, comp. with 6, iv. 20; Col. i. 3.
6. Paul worshiped the same God after his conversion that he did before; Acts xxiv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 3.
7. God is eternal; 1 Tim. i. 17.
Christ was *made* or *born*; Gal. iv. 4; Rom. i. 3.
8. God is immortal; 1 Tim. i. 17.
Christ was slain; 1 Cor. v. 7, &c. &c.
9. God is invisible; 1 Tim. i. 17, vi. 16.
Christ had been seen by the Apostle; 1 Cor. xv. 8.
10. Christ is a human being; Acts xiii. 23, xvii. 31; Rom. v. 15; 1 Cor. xv. 21; 1 Tim. ii. 5.
11. Christ was raised to life by the power of the Father; Acts xiii. 30, xvii. 31; Rom. iv. 24, vi. 4, viii. 11, xv. 15; 2 Cor. iv. 14, &c. &c.
12. Christ is subject to the Father; 1 Cor. xv. 24—28.
13. Christ is God's Christ; 1 Cor. iii. 22.
14. The head of Christ is God; 1 Cor. xi. 3.
15. God will judge the world by Christ; Acts xvii. 31; Rom. ii. 16.
16. Christ is the Son of God, according to the spirit of

holiness ; Rom. i. 4 ; but is never described as the Son of God by eternal generation.

17. "The Son of God" does not imply the deity of Christ's person ; Rom. v. 10 ; 1 Cor. xv. 28 ; 1 Thess. i. 10.

18. Christ our Lord is a person distinct from God ; Eph. iv. 5, 6 ; Acts xxii. 14 ; Rom. i. 8, ii. 16, v. 1, x. 9 ; 1 Cor. i. 30, vi. 14, viii. 6 ; 2 Cor. i. 2, &c. &c.

19. Paul never discloses the Trinity, never speaks of two natures in Christ, never prays to God the Son or God the Holy Ghost.



Sacred Poems by the late Dr. REGINALD HEBER, Second Bishop of Calcutta ; I. The Passage of the Red Sea, II. Infant Piety.

[THIS learned, amiable, and pious man was snatched away by death on the 3rd of April. He was visiting his diocese, and in the midst of his pastoral duties was carried off by an apoplectic fit, whilst bathing at Trichinopoly. He had scarcely filled the new see of Calcutta three years. His memory will be long revered, and he will ever rank in English literature amongst the most successful cultivators of Sacred Poetry. ED.]

The Passage of the Red Sea.

WITH heat o'erlabour'd and the length of way,
On Ethan's beach the bands of Israel lay.
'Twas silence all, the sparkling sands along,
Save where the locust trill'd her feeble song ;
Or blended soft in drowsy cadence, fell
The wave's low whisper or the camel's bell.—
'Twas silence all !—the flocks for shelter fly
Where, waving light, the acacia shadows lie ;
Or where, from far, the flatt'ring vapours make
The noon-tide semblance of a misty lake :
While the mute swain, in careless safety spread,
With arms enfolded, and dejected head,
Dreams o'er his wondrous call, his lineage high,
And, late reveal'd, his children's destiny.—
For, not in vain, in thralldom's darkest hour,
Had sped from Amram's sons the word of power ;
Nor fail'd the dreadful wand, whose godlike sway
Could lure the locust from her airy way ;

With reptile war assail their proud abodes,
And mar the giant pomp of Egypt's gods.
Oh, helpless Gods! who nought avail'd to shield
From fiery rain your Zoan's favour'd field!—
Oh, helpless Gods! who saw the curdled blood
Taint the rare lotus of your ancient flood,
And fourfold night the wondering earth enchain,
While Memnon's orient harp was heard in vain;—
Such musing held the tribes, till now the west
With milder influence on their temples prest;
And that portentous cloud, which all the day
Hung its dark curtain o'er their weary way,
(A cloud by day, a friendly flame by night,)
Roll'd back its misty veil, and kindled into light.—
Soft fell the eve; but ere the day was done,
Tall, waving banners streak'd the level sun,
And wide and dark along th' horizon red,
In sandy surge the rising desert spread.—
“Mark, Israel, mark!”—On that strange sight intent,
In breathless terror every eye was bent;
And busy faction's undistinguish'd hum,
And female shrieks arose, “They come, they come!”
They come, they come! in scintillating show,
O'er the dark mass the brazen lances glow;
And sandy clouds in countless shapes combine,
As deepens or extends the long tumultuous line;
And fancy's keener glance ev'n now may trace
The threatening aspects of each mingled race!—
For many of coal-black tribe and cany spear,
The hireling guards of Misraim's throne, were there,
From distant Cush they troop'd, a warrior train,
Siwah's green isle and Sennar's marly plain:
On either wing their fiery coursers check
The parch'd and sinewy sons of Amalek:
While close behind, inur'd to feast on blood,
Deck'd in Behemoth's spoils, the tall Shaugalla strode,
'Mid blazing helms and bucklers rough with gold.
Saw ye how swift the scythed-chariots roll'd:
Lo, these are they whom, lords of Afric's fates,
Old Thebes hath pour'd through all her hundred gates,
Mother of armies!—How the emeralds glow'd
Where, flush'd with power and vengeance, Pharaoh rode;
And stol'd in white those brazen wheels before,
Osiris' ark his swarthy wizards bore;

And still responsive to the trumpet's cry,
The priestly sistrum murmur'd—Victory!

Why swell these shouts that rend the desert's gloom?
Whom come ye forth to combat?—warriors, whom?
These flocks and herds—this faint and weary train,
Red from the scourge and recent from the chain,
God of the poor, the poor and friendless save!
Giver and Lord of freedom, help the slave!
North, south, and west, the sandy whirlwinds fly,
The circling horns of Egypt's chivalry.
On earth's last margin throng the weeping train;
Their cloudy guide moves on—"and must we swim the main?"
'Mid the light spray their snorting camels stood,
Nor bath'd a fetlock in the nauseous flood—
He comes—their leader comes! the man of God
O'er the wide waters lifts his mighty rod,
And onward treads—The circling waves retreat,
In hoarse deep murmurs, from his holy feet;
And the chas'd surges, inly roaring, show
The hard wet sand and coral hills below.

With limbs that falter, and with hearts that swell,
Down, down they pass—a steep and slippery dell—
Around them rise, in pristine chaos hurl'd,
The ancient rocks, the secrets of the world:
And flowers that blush beneath the ocean green,
And caves, the sea-calves' low-roof'd haunt, are seen.
Down, safely down the narrow pass they tread;
The beetling waters storm'above their head:
While far behind retires the sinking day,
And sheds on Edom's hills its latest ray.

Yet not from Israel fled the friendly light,
Or dark to them, or cheerless came the night.
Still in their van, along that dreadful road,
Blaz'd broad and fierce the brandish'd torch of God.
Its meteor glare a tenfold lustre gave,
On the long mirror of the rosy wave,
While its blest beams a sunlike heat supply,
Warm every cheek and dance in every eye,
To them alone, for Misraim's wizard train
Invoke for light their monster-gods in vain;
Clouds heap'd on clouds, their struggling sight confine,
A ten-fold darkness broods above their line.
Yet on they fare, by reckless vengeance led,
And range unconscious through the ocean's bed,

Till midway now, that strange and fiery form
Show'd his dread visage light'ning through the storm ;
With withering splendour blasted all their might,
And brake their chariot wheels, and marr'd their coursers'
flight.

" Fly, Misraim, fly !"—The ravenous floods they see,
And, fiercer than the floods, the Deity.

" Fly, Misraim, fly !"—From Edom's coral strand,
Again the prophet stretch'd his dreadful wand :—
With one wild crash the thundering waters sweep,
And all is waves—a dark and lonely deep ;
Yet o'er those lonely waves such murmurs past,
As mortal wailing swell'd the nightly blast :
And strange and sad the whispering breezes bore,
The groans of Egypt to Arabia's shore.

Oh ! welcome came the morn, where Israel stood
In trustless wonder by th' avenging flood !

Oh ! welcome came the cheerful morn, to show
The drifted wreck of Zoan's pride below ;
The mangled limbs of men, the broken car,
A few sad relics of a nation's war :

Alas, how few ! Then, soft as Elim's well,
The precious tears of new-born freedom fell ;
And he, whose harden'd heart alike had borne
The house of bondage and th' oppressor's scorn,
The stubborn slave, by hope's new beams subdued,
In faltering accents sobb'd his gratitude—

Till kindling into warmer zeal around,
The virgin timbrel wak'd its silver sound,
And in fierce joy, no more by doubt suppress'd,
The struggling spirit throbb'd in Miriam's breast ;
She, with bare arms, and fixing on the sky,
The dark transparence of her lucid eye,
Pour'd on the winds of heaven her wild sweet harmony.

" Where now," she sang, " the tall Egyptian spear,
On's sun-like shield, and Zoan's chariot, where !
Above their ranks the whelming waters spread.
Shout, Israel, for the Lord hath triumphed !"

And every pause between, as Miriam sang,
From tribe to tribe the martial thunder rang,
And loud and far their stormy chorus spread—

" Shout, Israel, for the Lord has triumphed !"

Infant Piety; a Hymn.

By cool Siloam's shady fountain,
 How sweet the lily grows !
 How sweet the breath on yonder mountain,
 Of Sharon's dewy rose !

Lo ! such the child whose young devotion,
 The paths of peace has trod ;
 Whose secret soul's instinctive motion,
 Tends upward to his God.

By cool Siloam's shady fountain,
 The lily must decay ;
 The rose that blooms on yonder mountain
 Must shortly fade away.

A little while, the bitter morrow
 Of man's maturer age
 Will shake the soul with cank'ring sorrow,
 And passion's stormy rage.

Oh Thou ! whose every year, untainted
 In changeless virtue shone,
 Preserve the flowers thy grace has planted,
 And keep them still thine own.

*Richard Brothers, the False Prophet.*

OUR readers recollect, no doubt, this political prophet, who made such a noise in the beginning of the French Revolutionary War, and whose cause was maintained by Mr. Halhed, the Oriental Scholar, in the House of Commons. An inquiry was two or three weeks ago made concerning him by a writer in the *Times* newspaper, to which a correspondent, subscribing himself "*Truth*," has made the following reply :

" Mr. Richard Brothers was confined in a private mad-house at Islington about 11 years ; was released by the Lord Chancellor Erskine ; lived some time in the neighbourhood of the Edgeware Road, afterwards in Baker Street North, where he died ; saw him a few days before ; was respectably dressed, very pale, very thin, a mere skeleton, very weak, could hardly walk, and died of a consumption. It was singular that the minister died of a broken heart,

and that the doctor under whose care he was confined laid violent hands on himself.* In the burying-ground of St. John's-wood chapel, near the Regent's Park, on the north side, or right hand, behind the chapel, and opposite to No. 6, on the wall, you will find a large plain stone with the following engraving on :

THIS GROUND
was bought by Mr. John Finlayson,
of Upper Baker Street,
to deposit under this stone the
mortal remains of Mr. RICHARD BROTHERS,
who resided and died in Mr. Finlayson's house,
on the 25th of January, 1824.

And about 150 yards further on, on the left hand, and about opposite to No. 44, on the wall, is the tomb-stone of Joanna Southcote."

—◆—
*Letters from the Rev. R. Wright, to the Unitarians in the
North-east District.*

LETTER VII.

Trowbridge, October 4, 1826.

MY CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

THE prosperity of your churches, and the success and progress of the cause among you, as well as your comfort and improvement as individuals, will much depend on your union and co-operation. Union is strength, and united efforts will effect what without co-operation would be impracticable. Whatever would produce disunion should be carefully guarded against and avoided, and all possible means used to strengthen the bonds of mutual affection, and excite to united exertions in the holy cause in which you are engaged.

A complete uniformity of opinion is not to be expected, and can hardly be thought practicable, in the present imperfect state ; nor is uniformity of opinion to be made the ground of your union. You are to unite as Christians on the ground of your common faith in Christ, or the general belief of the gospel : on this ground you are to act together, whatever dissonance of opinion may exist among you. Though each should aim at the highest attainable perfec-

* From this remark it would appear that the writer entertains some superstitious remembrance of "the mad prophet." Ed.

tion, yet, conscious of much imperfection and many defects in yourselves, you should not look for perfection in each other; but mutually exercise forbearance and long-suffering, and by bearing one another's burthens fulfil the law of Christ. If misunderstandings take place, and offences come, you should shew a readiness to give or receive explanation, to pass by offences, and study to prevent any breach of union and mutual affection, and if breaches do take place, endeavour, as soon as possible to heal them. These things are of great importance; for disunion and disaffection will diminish your strength, cripple your exertions, and frequently render the best-laid plans inefficient and abortive: and animosities and divisions, if not speedily healed, may prove destructive—not to say that such things scandalize and greatly injure the best of causes. I beseech you, therefore, my beloved brethren, that you watch over yourselves, and over one another in love; carefully guarding against every thing in your spirit and conduct that might give offence; using all possible means to prevent whatever would interrupt good understanding, mutual affection, and united exertions in the cause of truth and righteousness; and, that you do all you can to promote love and peace, and to excite one another to every good work.

If, unhappily, any divisions exist in any of your churches, or disaffection among any of the members of your churches, or misunderstandings and coolness between one church and another, I entreat you not to delay using all possible means to remove these evils. Study to shew a conciliating spirit, a readiness to pass by matters of difference, a desire to renew mutual love, and to forgive one another as God in Christ hath forgiven you. Let no one stand upon his own consequence, nor seek to please himself at the expense of edification and the general good. If you wish to see the work revived among you, and the good cause rendered successful, you must begin with regulating all such matters as the above among yourselves; you must renew mutual affection, be cordially united, and act together with one heart and one mind.

Remember the bond of union among you is not opinion, nor forms and ceremonies, nor frames and emotions falsely called experience; but the spirit of Christ, the mind that was in him, his temper or disposition: therefore diligently cultivate and live in the habitual exercise of this spirit. Love as brethren, and walk in love, as Christ also hath

loved you. Keep in view that you are all called to enjoy the same liberty, rights and privileges, as the disciples of Jesus, and that the gospel is designed to unite you together as brethren in one family, of which Christ is the head, and that he is the only Master, appointed of God in matters of religion. It is not enough that you meet together in the same place of worship; you should cultivate brotherly intercourse, and have fellowship one with another. Unless this be the case, how are you to edify one another? How are you a brotherhood? It is as you have Christian intercourse and fellowship, that your hearts will be knit together in love, that your mutual affection and zeal will be excited. An Apostle hath said, "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: but the rich in that he is made low." James i. 8, 9. As if he had said, Whatever distinctions exist between them in the world, and as to worldly things, let them mutually rejoice in being brought to one common state of privilege by the gospel, in being placed on a level in the house of God, as disciples of Christ.—Not only should you keep up free and brotherly intercourse as Christians, but by mutual kindness, tender sympathy, and reciprocal proofs of affectionate regard, strengthen the bonds of Christian brotherhood, and provoke unto love and to good works. If you do these things you will be mutually edified, your churches will prosper, and the cause flourish among you.

Though the subject of church discipline must be reserved for a distinct letter, I think it proper to observe here, that though your churches should ever be temples of liberty, they ought also to be habitations of righteousness and holiness. You should all pay the strictest regard to correctness of moral conduct; you cannot expect the blessing of God, or look for spiritual prosperity any farther than this is the case. Nothing can supply the want of integrity and virtue. If you neglect moral purity, you can have no excuse, as you do not expect the righteousness of another to supply your want of personal righteousness. Whatever your opposers may charge you with, let them never have reason to charge you with being lax in your moral conduct, with disregarding the commandments of your God. Not only keep yourselves pure, and practise evangelical righteousness, but carefully watch over the moral conduct of the children and youth among you: impress on them as deeply as possible the value and necessity of virtuous conduct, and

do all you can to fix in them the principles of right action. If a brother fall into sin, though you are not immediately to cast him off, it is your duty to do all you can to reform and restore him. It should be a leading object of the ministration of the word among you, to convert sinners from their evil ways, and to bring them to God and to righteousness. I beseech you, brethren, in all your proceedings, and in the whole of your deportment, to shew your regard to righteousness and holiness, and thus to adorn and recommend the doctrine you profess.

Unitarians have been charged with the neglect of public worship and indifference to Christian institutions. I trust this charge is far from true with respect to the generality of Unitarians, many of whom are exemplary in their attendance on public worship, and their regard to the institutions of Jesus Christ: yet I fear, my brethren, that some of you have given cause for the above charge. Let me expostulate with you on this subject. Though positive institutes and instrumental duties are not of equal value and importance with what is strictly of a moral nature, with love to God and love to man, and though their value consists in their suitableness and tendency to promote piety, virtue and goodness; yet they ought not on that account to be neglected, or treated with indifference. The words of our Lord to the Jews will apply in this case, "These ye ought to have done, and the other ye ought not to have left undone." All the institutions of Jesus Christ are of divine authority, therefore it is a part of our obedience as Christians to observe them. Can you then wilfully neglect the worship of God, treat with indifference the institutions of him whom you call your Lord, and be blameless? How will you answer for such conduct when you stand before his judgment-seat? Can you expect your souls should prosper and be in health, while you neglect the means appointed for your improvement and spiritual edification? Consider the influence which your example is likely to have upon others, in particular on the rising generation, and especially on your families. Where the heads of a family are negligent in their attention on public worship, it will be generally found that the family at large become so also. Think how discouraging it must be to your ministers, when they have laboured to prepare what they hoped would prove food to your souls, and minister to you edification and comfort, to find your places

empty, and that their labours for your good are so lightly esteemed and disregarded. Your neglect and indifference must also weaken the hands of your more zealous brethren, and give them pain, whilst it gives the enemy occasion to reproach your churches, and the denomination at large to which you belong, and to speak evil of the good cause which you are supposed to espouse, as if it led to such neglect and indifference. O ! consider what the Lord said to the church at Laodicea, on account of their lukewarmness, that he would cast them away, like a nauseous loathsome thing which is thrown out of the mouth. If you are thus negligent and indifferent, how can you expect the churches to which you belong should flourish, or the cause prosper among you ? I trust what I have here stated is not applicable to many of you ; I hope the greater part are otherwise minded : and I entreat those to whom the above remarks are applicable, to repent and do their first works, to rouse themselves from their lukewarmness and indifference, and to let their zeal for God and his cause be re-kindled, that they may escape the fearful doom of the slothful servant.

I exhort you all, my brethren, as you regard the cause in which Jesus sacrificed himself, as you wish to see the work of God revived among you, as you are anxious for the prosperity of the churches to which you belong, as you are concerned for the improvement and edification of your families and near connexions in life, and as you value your own happiness and will answer for your conduct at the tribunal of the great God, that you be firmly united and walk together in love, that you forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, but be punctual and diligent in your attention to the ministration of the word, and to every part of the public services ; that you unite your exertions to promote the success of the labours of your ministers, to edify one another and promote peace and mutual love, to advance the interest of your churches, and, by your Christian zeal and good example, to enlighten and improve the neighbourhood where you reside. Let me beseech you to shun the evil into which some have fallen, of not entering the assembly until the service has commenced, and of shewing indifference to the devotional part of it—the part in which they are more immediately called to participate, and which ought to be regarded as the most solemn and interesting. By such conduct they shew a want of

reverence to the great Object of worship, and of love to him, neglect their own edification, and are likely to attend to the sermon with less serious thought, proper feeling and interest, than if they had been prepared for it by a due attention to the whole of the devotional part of the service; not to say that they do harm by their bad example, and interrupt the attention of others by entering the assembly while engaged in the solemnities of divine worship. Let it not satisfy you to attend on one of the public services, when there are more on the Lord's-day, as this would be acting like those of old, who said, "When will the sabbath be over?"—"What a weariness it is to serve the Lord!" but always shew a readiness to unite with your brethren in all the public services they may think necessary, and calculated to promote the general edification.

It is by cordially uniting, heart and hand, in the same good work, and what should be regarded as a common cause; by acting in concert, with steadiness, zeal and perseverance, every one studying to do all in his power for the edification of the church, and the promotion of the cause, that you may hope for a revival, and to see your churches in a more flourishing state; and it is my most fervent prayer that this may be the case. Two more letters will conclude what I intend saying in this series. I remain, truly and affectionately, yours, &c.

R. WRIGHT.

Pious Frauds.

RADZIWIŁ, chancellor of Lithuania, having paid a visit to the pope, and received from him a present of some relics, when he returned home the news of his rarities spread, and some monks requested he would lend them for the relief of a poor man who was possessed. Radziwil complied; the relics were carried in solemn pomp, the usual exorcisms were made use of, the demoniac was dispossessed by their virtue, and all the spectators were convinced of the miracle. Radziwil, some few days after, was extolling the virtues of his relics, when one of his retinue, who had been intrusted with the possession of them, by laughing discovered himself, and was urged to a confession, that returning from Rome he had lost the box of relics, but not daring to speak of it, had got one like it, and filled it with little bones of beasts and such trifles as he could get, that were like the relics which he had lost.

Radziwil credited his servant's confession, but resolving to be satisfied, desired the monks to inquire if there were any other demoniac that wanted the assistance of his relics. A second was found, and exorcised in Radziwil's presence, who told the monks that he would have that man stay in his palace till the next day, and that they should retire. When they were gone, he put the demoniac into the hands of his Tartarian grooms; who, by stripes and scourgings obliged him to confess the cheat. In the morning Radziwil sends for the priests, in whose presence the fellow protested that he neither was nor ever had been possessed by the devil. The priests insisted it was a trick of the devil's, who spoke through the man's mouth. But Radziwil answered, If his Tartars had been able to force the devil to tell truth, they would be able to extort it from the mouths of the monks: when the monks perceiving the danger they were in, confessed the imposture, and pleaded that it was done with a good intention, to prevent the progress of heresy.

Mr. Swanwick's Address, on behalf of the Congregation, at the Ordination of the Rev. R. Brook Aspland, M. A., at Chester.

MANY Unitarian Dissenters are jealous of what is called Ordination, fearing, with praiseworthy apprehension, that the ignorant may attach superstitious notions to the service, and that powers may be claimed by ministers, and gradually conceded by congregations, which will in the end abridge if not destroy the liberties of the Christian people. We have called the apprehension "praiseworthy" in reference to the love of gospel freedom from which it springs, but we think we can prove by an example that it need not be seriously entertained. The example is exhibited in the *Ordination Services at Chester* just published,* in an 8vo. pamphlet, which is throughout a plain and bold renunciation

* The Services at the Ordination of the Rev. R. Brook Aspland, M. A., in the Chapel, Crook's Lane, Chester, on Wednesday, August 9, 1826; consisting of Prayers on the occasion, by the Rev. J. G. Roberts and the Rev. W. Turner, M. A. The Congregational Address, by Mr. Swanwick; and the Reply, by the Rev. R. Brook Aspland, M. A. The Sermon, by the Rev. William Shepherd; and the Charge, by the Rev. Robert Aspland. Chester: Printed by T. Griffith, Bridge Street. Sold by Poole and Harding, and J. Seacome, Chester; Willmer, Liverpool; and R. Hunter, St. Paul's Churchyard, London.

of superstition and assertion of *the liberty wherewith Christ hath made* both individuals and congregations *free*. No other service could have afforded so fitting an opportunity of protesting against imposition and tyranny, and of expounding and maintaining the rights of conscience on which Protestants, and particularly Protestant Dissenters, stand in their religious association. We have, no doubt, that every reader of the publication will fully agree with us in this remark; but for the sake of such as have not access to the "Services" we here insert the address of Mr. SWANWICK, the elder of the congregation, deputed by them to express their views and wishes to their young minister on this interesting occasion, which cannot fail of impressing those into whose hands the Christian Reformer may come with admiration of its truly Protestant principles, its manly tone and its affectionate Christian spirit. ED.

CONGREGATIONAL ADDRESS.

MY DEAR SIR,

IN deference to the wishes of the congregation, I, how little so ever qualified for the task, have undertaken to express our united sentiments upon the interesting occasion of your first introduction as our regular minister.

It is impossible that any invitation could have been sent with more cordial unanimity than that which has led to the service of this day. We welcome you affectionately amongst us;—we each of us seek to be your personal friend, to interchange with you the offices of kindness and co-operation, to maintain with you an intercourse manly, frank, candid and charitable.

We anticipate in you a diligent and cautious examination of the nature and bearing of Scripture evidence, a fearless following out of truth, an annunciation of your opinions characterized by a firmness which shall mark your feeling of their importance, and by a moderation and freedom from asperity, bespeaking your respect for individual judgment, and your sense of the fallibility of that judgment. In all things, anger is but a bad teacher, but in matters of religion, so purely personal, so entirely between man and his Creator, it is surely the worst of all; and in us who stand upon individual judgment and conscience, rejecting all human creeds, and all human dictation, a lack of charity were an error indeed. We do, therefore, my dear Sir, look to see exemplified in your preaching and life, the character of a consistent Dissenter.

We ask you for no confession of faith. Upon the strength of what we have heard from you, and of you—upon the knowledge that you are well acquainted with the general tenor of our principles, and, being so informed, have accepted our invitation, we conclude that you are satisfied of such an agreement between us in all the leading points of religious belief, as shall qualify you for occupying satisfactorily to us and to yourself the office of Christian minister amongst us. But we are too deeply convinced of the necessity of a judgment unshackled by public pledges, and of free and unbiassed inquiry into the momentous questions upon which it will be your duty to address us; we are too conscious of the changes which mature examination has produced in our own minds upon many points of early belief; we would too cautiously avoid occasion of cavilling upon small matters; and we too deeply reverence the right of private judgment, and the high tone and character of mind resulting from its free, conscientious, and diligent exercise, to wish for one instant to have any other pledge from you than that which results from the very essence of your calling as a Protestant Dissenting Minister.

I have already stated, my dear Sir, that you have been unanimously chosen as our minister; no individual of your congregation has gone unconsulted; all have been asked for their free and candid opinion; and all have given their voice for your appointment. This we conceive to be genuine ordination. There is no earthly power to improve your title, and it remains with yourself alone to seal it with that heavenly approbation and sanction with which none of our brother mortals can stamp it.

We have indeed thought the occasion a fit one for impressing both you and ourselves with the importance of the new relationship in which we are placed to each other; and we have therefore desired to congregate around us those most eminent for talent, and most mature in judgment, and most enriched by experience; and we have sought the assistance of one in particular, whose standing in our Church, whose devotedness to truth, and whose intimate connexion with yourself, must give to his admonitions an especial authority and a peculiar grace. But if in thus acting we have sought to draw the bands of fellowship and friendship more instantly and straightly

around us, to bring us at once into contact and sympathy, and make us even to-day members of the same family, it cannot surely be inferred, as some have hastily imagined, that we hereby contemplate the communication to you of extraordinary powers, or recognize any increased authority to your ministration, but such as may result from a heart deeply affected, and an understanding influenced by the lessons of experience. We dread superstition, and deprecate the unauthorized assumption of transmitted sanctity. We are no favourers of ought that would narrow the road to heaven, or would impede it with obstacles of human invention. But it is possible, we think, to be "superstitiously afraid of superstition;"—and we would not reject the unexceptionable means to a good end, because these means may be occasionally associated with objectionable practices. Religion is not bad because some extract from it little but bitterness and gloom, uncharitableness and anathema, or soil its purity by allying it to worldly ambition and individual cupidity. Public worship is not to be abandoned because it may be, and has been, converted into idle pageantry and heartless show. We will not discard our simple ministry through dread of the pomp and circumstance of mitred churches and political establishments. And therefore, Sir, as we hope that you are to aid us in fashioning the youthful mind to the reception of the highest and purest motives, and the conduct of our children to practical virtue; and that your instructions will tend to guard all against the inroads of that selfishness which active engagements in the world are too apt to generate, and to strengthen all in whatever is praiseworthy and of good report—we do not think it either unnatural or unwise to commence our connexion with you by listening to admonitions and joining in a service calculated simply to impress upon our minds the vital importance of the objects we are pursuing, and the means most likely to ensure their attainment.

Having thus imperfectly stated the feelings and intentions with which we have invited the services of this day, I will conclude, my dear Sir, by again tendering to you the right hand of fellowship, and expressing, in the name of the congregation, our most fervent wishes for your success and happiness.



Epitaph in Wanstead Churchyard on a Tomb-stone erected to the Memory of Mr. Winterton, aged 66.

Self-exil'd from his kindred, here he lies,
 Who once was dearly lov'd—alone he dies ;
 When fortune frown'd, he hung his drooping head
 In solitude—and long was mourn'd as dead ;
 At length his weary pilgrimage is run,
 The battle fought ;—we hope the crown is won.

The Restoration of Israel. By the Rev. George Croly.

[From "The Amulet, or Literary and Christian Remembrancer" for 1827, a beautiful little volume which is cordially recommended to the reader.]

"And I heard a voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and HE shall dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."—REV. xxi. 3.

KING of the dead ! how long shall sweep
 Thy wrath ! how long thy outcasts weep !
 Two thousand agonizing years
 Has Israel steeped her bread in tears ;
 The vial on her head been poured—
 Flight, famine, shame, the scourge, the sword !
 'Tis done ! Has breathed thy trumpet blast,
 The TRIBES at length have wept their last !
 On rolls the host ! From land and wave
 The earth sends up th' unransom'd slave !
 There rides no glittering chivalry,
 No banner purples in the sky ;
 The world within their hearts has died ;
 Two thousand years have slain their pride !
 The look of pale remorse is there,
 The lip, involuntary prayer ;
 The form still marked with many a stain—
 Brand of the soil, the scourge, the chain ;
 The serf of Afric's fiery ground ;
 The slave, by Indian suns embrowned ;
 The weary drudges of the oar,
 By the swart Arab's poisoned shore,
 The gatherings of earth's wildest tract—
 On bursts the living cataract !
 What strength of man can check its speed ?
 They come—the Nation of the Freed ;

Who leads their march? Beneath His wheel
 Back rolls the sea, the mountains reel!
 Before their tread His trump is blown,
 Who speaks in thunder, and 'tis done!
 King of the dead! Oh, not in vain
 Was thy long pilgrimage of pain;
 Oh, not in vain arose thy prayer,
 When pressed the thorn thy temples bare;
 Oh, not in vain the voice that cried,
 To spare thy maddened homicide!
 Even for this hour thy heart's blood streamed;
 They come!—the Host of the Redeemed!

What flames upon the distant sky?
 'Tis not the comet's sanguine dye,
 'Tis not the lightning's quivering spire,
 'Tis not the sun's ascending fire.
 And now, as nearer speeds their march,
 Expands the rainbow's mighty arch;
 Though there has burst no thundercloud,
 No flash of death the soil has ploughed,
 And still ascends before their gaze,
 Arch upon arch, the lovely blaze;
 Still, as the gorgeous clouds unfold,
 Rise towers and domes, immortal mould.

Scenes! that the patriarch's visioned eye
 Beheld, and then rejoiced to die;—
 That, like the altar's burning coal,
 Touched the pale prophet's harp with soul;
 That the throned seraphs long to see,
 Now given, thou slave of slaves, to thee!
 Whose city this? What potentate
 Sits there the King of Time and Fate?
 Whom glory covers like a robe,
 Whose sceptre shakes the solid globe,
 Whom shapes of fire and splendour guard?
 There sits the Man, "whose face was marred,"
 To whom archangels bow the knee—
 The weeper in Gethsemane!
 Down in the dust, aye, Israel, kneel;
 For now thy withered heart can feel!
 Aye, let thy wan cheek burn like flame,
 There sits thy glory and thy shame!

Evangelical Preaching.

SIR,

Homerton, October 15, 1826.

RAM'S CHAPEL in this place was introduced to the readers of the *Christian Reformer* in your last volume, pp. 19—28. I was induced to visit it on Sunday last, by the public announcement that two Sermons in behalf of the Church Missionary Society would be preached there by the Rev. Hugh M'Neile, M. A., "Rector of Albury, and Chaplain to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and to his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin." The fame of this gentleman preceded his appearance, and produced, in the evening especially, an overflowing audience.—He is without doubt an extraordinary man: very prepossessing in his appearance, and earnest, eloquent, impassioned in his delivery. There is a sort of witchery about him, which, even in spite of themselves, rivets the attention of his hearers. He that should go to laugh, would be disposed to remain and seriously hear; not because he would admire the preacher's doctrines—they, I should think, are rather too high-seasoned to be palatable to the majority of regular professors—but because of the solemn earnestness which characterizes his discourse throughout. Mr. M'Neile is the most violent preacher I ever heard, yet there is no appearance of cant or affectation. The most hardened scoffer would swear to his sincerity: tone, look, action, all declare that what he says he feels. There is, all the freshness of nature about him. He is an orator, and a fine one; but his is not the oratory of the college: feeling, not rule, regulates the tone of his voice.

He gave us a sermon in the morning on Human Depravity—one which few of his hearers can hardly ever forget: it must have made their blood run cold. Talk of the horrors of the Assembly's Catechism—they are nothing in comparison. The doctrines were the same, but Mr. M'Neile gave them all the advantage of his fine and commanding oratory, and the effect on his audience must have been powerful. I could not forbear an involuntary shudder now and then as this Rev. gentleman described the state of man here and his prospects hereafter. He is, Heaven knows, no preacher of "smooth words." The old arch Enemy of man could not speak more rancorously of human nature than he did. All the opprobrious epithets which St. Paul

applies to particular classes of wilful transgressors were borrowed by Mr. M'Neile to describe the character of every *natural* man. We are idolators, adulterers, drunkards, revellers, murderers, lovers of witchcraft, strife, sedition, heresies, and I know not what else besides. These vices meet in and branch out from the heart, like the spokes of a wheel (the preacher's own figure) from its centre. Much had been said about the dignity of human nature. Even in Christian England, philosophers had talked and written about man's inherent love of justice, of his gratitude, his generosity, his high sense of honour, his love of piety and goodness : his mind had been compared to a sheet of white paper, on which either good or bad impressions might be written by education. "But," said the reverend gentleman, "'tis a lie—as black a lie as was ever hatched by Beelzebub himself."—He spoke of "the pest of Socinianism," which he was informed greatly infested the neighbourhood—a system which went to the utter denial of the most plainly-taught doctrines of God's word : man's fallen state was one which it discarded, although without that doctrine there was "neither beauty nor symmetry in the gospel."—Adam represented the whole human race ; when he sinned all sinned and became justly exposed to eternal damnation. Every generation that shall exist to the end of time, as much transgressed in the sight of God as did the actual transgressor, for by disobedience man's whole nature became changed. As the offspring of Adam, we partake of his nature in all its baseness and offensiveness—of consequence, we must be hateful to a God of purity. Many persons, Mr. M'Neile said, shrunk instinctively from the reception of this doctrine when it was presented to them in its plain, naked form. But what did this prove? That "our thoughts are not as God's thoughts." It was a doctrine taught plainly, unequivocally in Scripture ; those who professed to believe in the Bible were bound to receive it. God had spoken in his word ; man's part was to hear, receive, obey.

After the statement of a doctrine comes its application. Mr. M'Neile argued, first, that the notion of man's complete depravity is a grand corrective of pride. This will be granted on all sides. No very great self-esteem can that man have who really believes himself incapable of thinking and doing aught but evil. Quite as natural a result, too, from this doctrine, which the preacher did not

notice, would seem man's justifiable complacency in the commission of crime. Say that my nature prompts as naturally to vice and crime as to the gratification of hunger and thirst—that I might just as well attempt to live without eating as without sinning—and that whether I run into all the excesses with which human nature can be disgraced, or live so that I may defy the whole world to detect a flaw in my character, I am equally hateful to God, and shall most assuredly receive just the same punishment at his hands—tell me this, as “Evangelical” preachers do tell me, and what better excuse can I have for doing whatever interest or passion shall suggest, even though it urge to crimes that would make me the veriest scoundrel upon earth? My nature, Sir, is my apology. “Can an Ethiopian change his skin or a leopard its spots?” To say that man deserves censure, much less punishment, for doing what he cannot possibly avoid, is talking more idly than did ever any poor idiot. Will Mr. M’Neile reply, that although we cannot of ourselves refrain from evil and do good, yet that to those who ask in prayer and with earnestness divine assistance will be granted? But whence comes the wish to be delivered from evil? From man himself? No, surely; Mr. M’Neile says he is so thoroughly corrupted that he cannot think a good thought—“the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit.” Admit that man of himself can feel a longing after holiness, and his alleged natural relish for vice only appears at once “a lie”—the doctrine of human depravity exists no longer. How, then, does the desire for divine assistance spring up in the depraved one’s bosom? It is Heaven’s own work, and “gospel” Christians call it “the effects of grace.” One question more: Why do not ALL feel the workings of grace, since with regard to merit all are on a perfect equality? Let “Evangelical” Christians make answer; and I would beseech them before they do so to meditate awhile on the words, from an authority they dare not treat lightly, “*God is no respecter of persons.*”

This doctrine, 2ndly, Mr M’Neile said, strikes at the root of the “Socinian scheme,” for that went to its utter denial, while the word of inspiration expressly taught it. And how was the existence of evil accounted for by Socinians?—those Rationalists who would bring every thing in nature and revelation to a level with their own comprehensions. Why, (the reverend gentlemen begged the par-

ticular attention of his audience to this,) by making God the author of sin—a conclusion, the statement of which seemed to fill him with horror, as no doubt it did the majority of his hearers. I am not a professor of Unitarianism, and must leave the defence of any of its peculiarities to those who hold them: so far, however, as I understand that system, there is no necessary connexion between it and the somewhat startling notion mentioned by Mr. McNeile. But, at any rate, his solution of a professedly mysterious question is not less “blasphemous” than that which he charged Socinians with holding. Man, he says, was created pure and perfect, a sort of demi-god upon earth; all his feelings and habits partook of the purity from whence he sprung. Now, such a goodly being was not created without some design: it was either intended that he should remain perfect or it was not. No one will say nay to this. Then one or other of the following alternatives must be taken—the designs of *Omnipotence* were *thwarted*, or the descendants of Adam were not destined to possess a nature so excellent as his originally was. Mr. McNeile chooses the first of these results; than which, a sentiment more grossly absurd and impious was never “hatched” by the mind of man. He will deny that he does, and express horror at the conclusion. And so it is with the majority of religious folks: they profess certain opinions, but will not admit consequences which *must* as inevitably result from them as warmth from fire. If sin and suffering were never intended to exist, but exist contrary to the will and intention of our Creator, how can the conclusion be avoided, that the Creator’s designs have from the beginning been frustrated? Would to God that men would use the powers they possess, and not on matters which most nearly concern their peace let Reason be as useless as though they had it not! “We have Scripture warrant,” they say, “for what we believe: our ministers overpower us with texts in proof of our opinions.” *Texts*, say ye? Was there ever a religious party existing that could not produce texts innumerable in support of its pretensions? It is not texts, but the sense you put upon those texts, which must determine the matter. Any thing and every thing may be proved by texts, taken unconnectedly. An anecdote which I remember reading some time ago may serve as an illustration. A person travelling in a stage-coach, much to the annoyance of a fellow-passenger,

would talk about his peculiar theological notions, in support of which he produced abundance of Scripture. The teased listener, wishing to get rid of the talker's "fending and proving," said he could find passages in the New Testament to justify self-murder. "'Judas went and hanged himself,' is a Scripture text, isn't it?" "Yes." "And is not, 'Go thou and do likewise'?"

Mr. M'Neile shewed, 3rdly, that man's depravity was the ground of missionary exertions. Although in Adam we all, spiritually, died, by faith in Christ we are made alive again. In a state of nature, without any sin of his own, man deserves eternal damnation; clinging to the merits of a Redeemer, he becomes regenerated, and, without any righteousness of his own, the inheritor of heaven. But the atonement made by the Saviour, to be efficacious to a soul's salvation, must be known, embraced, depended upon. This was the stimulus Christians had to disseminate the Scriptures in Heathen lands. Without a knowledge of the scheme of redemption no one could enjoy the invaluable blessings it offered. Millions had perished for lack of that knowledge; multitudes were annually perishing; and the preacher called upon his hearers, if they had a spark of benevolence in their bosoms, and as they would answer for their neglect at the last day, to do what they could for their perishing fellow-creatures. Suppose an account were sent them of the inhabitants of some district in India dying by hundreds and thousands from a scarcity of food; would not he be deemed execrable who, out of his abundance, should refuse a small pittance to relieve their wants? But the actual state of things called more loudly upon his hearers' compassion, Mr. M'Neile said, than would the case he had imagined. Myriads of human beings—not the inhabitants of one district only, but of many districts, of whole countries—were perishing—not, indeed, having their earthly existence shortened through famine by a few days or years—but they were perishing everlastingly, for want of that spiritual food which it was in the power of Englishmen to bestow.

One's horror and shame and pity are excited by such descriptions. To what, Great God, do thy creatures liken thee? A Creator of countless myriads of beings for no other purpose than to render them eternally miserable: an Avenger of the first man's transgression on millions of his descendants who know not even the name of their proge-

nitor: a Father, yet the deadliest enemy of thy children, from whose lips will burst forth deep and loud and everlastingly-continued curses against Him, who forced them into existence! And, as if in mockery, they who thus represent the Eternal One, talk of his mercy, and say his nature is love! Reason on such a dogma as this, we need not; the understanding and feelings of every one whose heart is not deadened by system revolt at it, as alike insulting to God and man; and with those who, being *regenerated*, can listen to such descriptions without having their piety shocked, it were useless to argue: they are lifted high above us: luxuriating in spiritual ecstasies, they have learned to subdue the natural workings of their hearts, to esteem, as an eminent writer says, every thing wicked in proportion as it is natural.

In the evening Mr. M'Neile, in a sermon of an hour and a half's length, detailed the degree of success to be expected from missionary exertions. Most false ideas were entertained on this subject by the supporters of missions. People imagined that by increasing the means now employed for evangelizing Heathen countries, whole nations would be brought to embrace Christianity—that, by human means, “the knowledge of the Lord would cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.” Those who expected this would be completely disappointed; prophecy gave no countenance to such a notion. The dispensation under which we are now living, does not contemplate the existence of an universal church, but of an elect church, to be formed indeed by persons of every tribe and people, but of a very small portion of each. Look at the actual state of things. Christianity had existed for 1800 years, and yet how small its progress in the world! Our globe was said to be covered by 800 millions of inhabitants. Six hundred millions of these were idolaters, and 100 millions more were Mahometans, leaving 100 millions as the professed disciples of Christ.—Of course, the two first-mentioned bodies were consigned in a lump to the regions of darkness. But out of the number who professed Christianity, how many, Mr. M'Neile asked his hearers, were really practical Christians? Were one-fourth? He thought even this calculation too charitable; but, round numbers in large calculations being convenient, he would suppose—he did not think it probable, though—that in every generation of 800 millions, 50 millions might be saved! In this calculation,

as will be seen, an allowance was made for the spread of Christianity in foreign parts.—All that Christians have to expect from missionary exertions is the conversion of a portion of every nation; it matters not how few, so that some are called. This done, their work is finished. Then the Saviour will descend from heaven on Mount Zion, and a miraculous conversion of the Jewish nation take place. From them will issue forth missionaries, who (possessing, I suppose, supernatural powers) are to convert the whole world.

I have, Sir, given an outline of this discourse as briefly as possible; for, to speak the truth, I am tired of my task. The mind, like the body, soon becomes sick by feeding on dainties. I have not knowingly exaggerated a single expression of Mr. M'Neile's, or put one in a light he did not intend.

G.

INTELLIGENCE.

Extracts from the Second Annual Report of the Committee of the Somerset, Gloucester and Wilts Unitarian Association, read before the Meeting at Calne, on Wednesday, September 13, 1826.

THE state of things in the country at large, during the last twelve months, has been extremely unfavourable to the obtaining of pecuniary resources for benevolent purposes; but it is hoped that an improvement in this respect will ere long take place, and that the ability of this Association to promote their important objects will be increased. Far from desponding, your Committee cherish the most sanguine hopes of the ultimate success of their plans, upon an extensive scale.

Your Committee have thought it a leading object to secure, by all possible means, the ground already gained. Acting on this principle, they have felt it a duty, after having prevented the cause at Marshfield from dying away, to continue their attention to, and fostering care of, that place to the present time, lest the labour they had before bestowed upon it should be lost. Their doing this has taken so much from their small funds as to prevent their exertions in some other directions; but they have the pleasure of finding that what they have done there is likely to be productive of much permanent good.

Our worthy friend Mr. Martin commenced his ministry at Marshfield early in April; since which time he has laboured there with unabating zeal, and conducted the affairs of the congregation with much firmness and judgment. By his exertions some necessary repairs in the chapel and burying-ground

have been effected; * the Sunday-school has increased, and it now contains about fifty children; the Fellowship Fund is steadily kept up, and annually subscribes a guinea to the Association, and notwithstanding several discouraging circumstances, the congregation gradually improves. In July, Mr. Martin preached the first annual sermon for the Sunday-school, when the chapel was well filled, and the amount of the collection more than had been anticipated.

In April, Mr. Harding, (who was employed for a short time as a Missionary by your Committee,) accompanied by Mr. Martin and the Secretary, visited Nailsworth, a small town in the midst of a populous manufacturing district in Gloucestershire. This was entirely new ground, no previous attempts having been made there to introduce Unitarian Christianity. A room was with difficulty procured, and Mr. Harding preached three times to respectable and attentive audiences. Since then, Messrs. Wright, Clarke and H. Hawkes have visited Nailsworth, who have not only preached, but had much conversation with some of those who came to hear. A number of pamphlets were distributed among them, and the result of these labours is, that a small Unitarian society is already formed there, who meet together every Lord's-day in a room to worship the one God, and improve each other by reading the Scriptures, and doing what they can for mutual edification. They are assisted with occasional services by the ministers of the Association. The success in this important neighbourhood is highly encouraging, and in it we have reason to rejoice.

In the other congregations connected with the Association, no material alteration has taken place during the past year. The Committee are happy to hear that at Calne, Mr. Davis, who has for so many years served the cause by his labours, and done honour to it by his character, is still capable, notwithstanding his great age, of officiating once on a Lord's-day, and that the attendance is good. They will willingly assist him and his congregation as far as may be in their power. It also gives them pleasure to learn that a Fellowship Fund is formed at Calne.

At Trowbridge and Bradford, things are much as usual; it is hoped that on the whole the cause advances in those places.

Your Committee consider it important to put into circulation as many small tracts as may be practicable. To this object they have not been inattentive. Through the medium of Mr. Edward Nias one hundred tracts were presented by the Birmingham Tract Society for this purpose. [Since this Report was drawn up, the Committee have received from Mr. William Browne, of Bristol, a donation of a hundred copies of the Rev. Michael Maurice's interesting "Account of the Life and Reli-

* This was accomplished by a private subscription.

gious Opinions of John Bawn, of Frenchay."] Your Committee had two thousand copies printed of the interesting account of "Sally Thorn"; 1300 of which have been sold, and the remainder distributed; it is intended to publish a new edition of it in a short time.

Mr. Davidson and Mr. H. E. Howse, Jun., having been appointed your representatives for this year, attended the annual meeting of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association; the report they made of our proceedings was received by them with pleasure; since which their Committee have proposed to assist us in supporting a regular missionary in this district; but as our finances will not at present admit of our bearing a share in the expense of supporting such a missionary, we have been under the painful necessity of declining their kind proposal. We hope, however, the time is not far distant when we shall be enabled to carry it into effect; and the Committee of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association have voted us twenty-five pounds, to be advanced whenever our future exertions may require it.

Nottingham Fellowship Fund.

On Sunday, September 10th, after the service of the afternoon, the members of the Fellowship Fund belonging to the religious society of Christian Unitarians on the High-Pavement, Nottingham, assembled in their girls' school-room for the purpose of holding their Anniversary Meeting, when a wish being expressed that the Annual Meetings should have more of a social quality to increase their interest, which, it was observed is in some societies promoted by the members and friends of the Fund taking tea together,—it was moved by the Rev. B. Carpenter, and seconded by Mr. Olive Moore, that the Anniversary Meeting of the High-Pavement Fellowship Fund should be adjourned to Monday the 18th instant, and that the members and friends of the Institution should be invited to tea on the evening of that day. The motion was agreed to unanimously, and the business of the Fund was deferred.

On the evening of Monday, September 18th, a respectable party (about ninety in number) of the subscribers and friends of the High-Pavement Fellowship Fund, met in the girls' school-room attached to the High-Pavement Chapel to commemorate their Annual Meeting. After tea, the Rev. James Tayler was called to the Chair, who read an interesting report of the proceedings for the past year, as well as stated the objects which the society had in view. The funds were appropriated to the erection or repairs of different chapels, to the education of students at Manchester College, York, and for disseminating religious instruction in different parts of the kingdom.

Three pounds having been voted toward the discharge of a debt on the building of the Unitarian Chapel in Salford, Manchester, (of which the Rev. J. R. Beard is minister,) it was pro-

posed by a member, and seconded, and carried unanimously, that the grant should be four pounds; and a general wish expressed, that every Fellowship Fund in the kingdom would come forward in aid of a society whose minister has shewn himself to be so able an advocate in the cause of truth by his Four Letters to Taylor and Carlile on their denial that Jesus Christ ever existed.

The proceedings of the society were closed with singing and prayer; and from the unanimity which prevailed, and the perfect satisfaction which was manifested, it is expected that the newly-introduced practice of taking tea together at the Annual Meeting will be repeated by the members of the Fund.

The Wesleyan Methodist Conference.

(From the *Congregational Magazine*.)

THE Eighty-eighth Annual Conference of the Methodist Preachers was held at Liverpool, on Wednesday, July 26, 1826, and following days. The Rev. Richard Watson was elected President, and the Rev. Jabez Bunting Secretary to the Conference.

The following particulars, from its published minutes, will be acceptable to our readers.

Forty preachers were received into full connexion.

Twenty-four preachers have died during the past year.

Four preachers have ceased to travel.

The number of regular travelling preachers, and of supernumeraries, and superannuated preachers, is as follows, viz.

In Great Britain:

Regular preachers	733	
Supernumerary and superannuated	81	
		814

In Ireland:

Regular preachers	83	
Irish missionaries	21	
Supernumerary & superannuated preachers	34	
		138

In the Foreign Stations:

Regular preachers & assistant missionaries	149	
Supernumerary and superannuated	3	
		152

Total number of Anglican Methodist Preachers 1104

The number of members in Great Britain is 231,045, being an increase of 1378 members during the past year.—Ditto in Ireland, 22,514, being an increase of 437.—Ditto in Foreign Stations, 32,960, being an increase of 626.—General total of members under the care of the British and Irish Conferences,

286,519, making an increase in the connexion during the past year of 2,441 members.

To these must be added the returns of the several Wesleyan Conferences in the United States of America for 1825; from which it appears that the total number of regular circuit preachers, supernumerary and superannuated missionaries to the Indians, &c., is 1314; and that the number of members is as follows:

Whites	291,007
Coloured and Blacks	49,433
Indians	704
	341,144

being an increase of 19,672 members during the past year.

The grand total of Wesleyan Methodists through the world is 630,081 of whom 2,418 are preachers in the connexion.

There were no deputies from the United States at the Conference; but a letter was addressed to them by the Rev. Bishops George and Hedding, on behalf of their brethren of the Episcopal Board. The answer of the British Conference addressed to the Bishops of the Methodist Societies contains the following passages: "We affectionately hope that no difference of opinion which may exist amongst you on minor points of ecclesiastical government will be allowed to excite unfriendly feeling, to retard the progress of your ministerial labours, or to impair any part of the system of discipline which relates to the more essential and vital principles of our original constitution. From the peculiar distresses of the present times, many of our people have suffered considerably in their temporal circumstances, and our plans for extending and establishing the cause of God have in some degree been impeded. We cannot this year report a very large increase of numbers, but we trust that we are still favoured with a considerable degree of religious prosperity."

A paragraph in the Liverpool Advertiser announced that it had been determined in Conference to appoint three of the leading preachers as Bishops, with an episcopal or overlooking power, and it further ventured to name the gentlemen who are to be elevated to this new episcopate. No such determination is, however, recorded in the *published* minutes, and we presume has not been adopted. But it is evident that the step from district to general superintendents is not great, especially after the American Conferences have made it. The absence of lay representation in the Conference may also facilitate its accomplishment whenever it is formally introduced into the British Conference.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Communications have been received from A. Y.; and R. W. W.
 "The Character of Alla Bhye" is also received.

TO SUBSCRIBERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

It will be seen by the following PROSPECTUS, which we are requested by the Sub-Committee of the Unitarian Association to insert in the body of our work, that **THE MONTHLY REPOSITORY** is about to be transferred to new hands. To prevent any mistake, we take this opportunity of stating that *no change* will take place in **THE CHRISTIAN REFORMER**, except that the Editor hopes to make it more worthy of public patronage, by some Improvements in the next volume. The work will be somewhat enlarged, though the price will remain the same. It is intended to have a regular department of instructive biography. The Deaths of persons at all distinguished in the circle of **THE CHRISTIAN REFORMER** will be uniformly registered. Some pages will be devoted every month to interesting religious and other Intelligence. Occasionally, accounts will be given of new and valuable books. The Editor hopes by these means to make this little work still more extensively useful to the numerous and happily increasing number of theological readers in the humbler walks of society. His views cannot, however, be realized without the co-operation of those that think **THE CHRISTIAN REFORMER** worthy of their support. He therefore invites their assistance, hoping that the increase of the circulation of the work will serve the cause of truth and freedom and virtue. Communications are respectfully invited; but the Editor may be permitted to remind correspondents that to suit such a periodical as **The Christian Reformer**, brevity must of necessity be consulted. Newspapers or tracts relating to local religious controversy, and explanatory of the progress of the public mind, in knowledge and liberality will be gladly received; as will all authentic accounts of the growth of truth and charity abroad, and particularly in the United States of America.

In one respect the Editor has the most satisfactory proofs of the usefulness of **THE CHRISTIAN REFORMER**, and that is, in the detection and exposure of calumnious misrepresentations of the Unitarians by their opponents. The same object is contemplated in the ensuing numbers, and correspondents are requested to furnish the Editor with authentic statements of the false accusations that may be set up by Bigots against honest inquirers and Christian learners. The mere publication of a calumny is frequently its refutation, and is the surest way of preventing its repetition.

Although several numbers of **THE CHRISTIAN REFORMER** have been reprinted, many are very scarce, and some are nearly out of print: subscribers are therefore advised to make early application for *back Numbers and Volumes* to complete their sets.

The wide circulation of **THE CHRISTIAN REFORMER** constitutes it a useful channel for **ADVERTISEMENTS**, which will be received on moderate terms, by the Publishers or the Printer. Communications are to be addressed to the Editor at the Publishers'.

NEW SERIES
OF
THE MONTHLY REPOSITORY.

On Monday, the 1st of January next, will be published, price 1s. 6d.

NO. I.

Of a NEW SERIES of

The Monthly Repository

AND

REVIEW

OF THEOLOGY AND GENERAL LITERATURE.

Printed for the Proprietors by G. SMALLFIELD, Hackney,
And sold at the MONTHLY REPOSITORY OFFICE, No. 3, Walbrook
Buildings, Walbrook, and by R. HUNTER, St. Paul's Churchyard.

PROSPECTUS.

The utility and importance of Periodical Works are now universally recognized by all classes of the reading public; and different parties in Religion, in Literature, and in Philosophy, have employed them as suitable and efficient instruments for diffusing a knowledge of their respective systems.

In the Unitarian body, the Monthly Repository has long been the principal, and indeed the sole, periodical publication which could be considered as the organ of their sentiments; and its value in this point of view has been generally acknowledged. The time is, however, arrived when a work upon a somewhat different plan, and aspiring to higher excellence of literary execution, seems to be called for; and it has been thought that in the hands of several joint Proprietors, and under the superintendence of Conductors whose names should not be divulged, the impediments which have necessarily restricted the powers of the Editor might be effectually avoided, the work raised in its literary character and reputation, and its circulation very considerably extended. With this conviction, the copyright has been purchased by a number of individuals, under whose auspices a New Series will be commenced on the First day of January next.

The objects contemplated in the New Series of the Monthly Repository are substantially the same as those which were aimed

at in the original work. It will, like its predecessor, combine the twofold character of a Theological and Literary Miscellany, and be made a **REPOSITORY** for the productions of men of learning and talents of all sentiments, on the different topics of Literature, Religion and Morals. The Conductors intend that it should stand in the foremost rank of those journals which are zealously devoted to the cause of Liberty. Their pages will always be open to the free discussion of all controverted subjects which may properly fall within their province, so long as the discussion is conducted with that ability and courtesy which ought ever to distinguish the writings of the Scholar and the Christian.

The New Series of the Monthly Repository will of necessity convey the opinions, and be imbued with the feelings and prepossessions, of the persons from whom it emanates; but this circumstance will not be allowed to degrade it into a merely sectarian publication, the exclusive vehicle of party prejudice and intolerance. If to a certain extent it will be employed in the exposition and defence of Unitarian tenets, (the denomination *Unitarian* being here understood in the most comprehensive and catholic sense,) the Conductors will always give insertion to papers avowedly intended to controvert them, with this only reserve, that they display a competent knowledge of the subject, and be kept within the legitimate boundaries of fair and liberal discussion.

The first department of the work will be devoted to **ORIGINAL PAPERS** and **GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE**, and will open a wide field for the admission of the most interesting topics of Literature. This portion will embrace the important subjects of Metaphysics, Biblical Criticism, Doctrinal and Practical Theology, Morals, Jewish and Christian Antiquities, Church History, ancient and modern, Civil History, Biography, Philological and Classical Disquisitions, Bibliography, with illustrative extracts from rare and curious books; besides numerous other matters of a more miscellaneous kind.

The want of a liberal Review in which the merits of works not in unison with the popular opinions, especially on religious subjects, might be impartially examined, has long been generally felt. This deficiency in our Periodical Literature it is meant that the New Series of the Monthly Repository shall supply, as far as its limits will permit. The second department will, for this purpose, be assigned to the **REVIEW**.—Out of the numerous works perpetually issuing from the press, the Conductors will select for criticism those which bear on the great controversies of the day, affecting Biblical Knowledge and Religious Liberty, together with others which may appear to possess peculiar interest from the nature of their contents, or

the acknowledged talents and celebrity of the authors.—Besides the more elaborate reviews of important books, there will be inserted shorter Critical Notices of publications of inferior consequence. It would greatly facilitate the labours of the Conductors in this department, and extend its usefulness, if authors and publishers would favour them with copies of their books as early as possible after their appearance.

A portion of the Monthly Repository will be allotted to **RELIGIOUS, LITERARY and MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION.** This department will comprehend announcements of books in the course of preparation for the press, interesting facts relating to Religion or Literature, and remarkable discoveries in Science; occasional proceedings of Learned Societies; notices of contemporary British Periodicals, with selections from their contents; and extracts from Foreign Journals illustrative of the state of religious inquiry, and of literature and science, in various parts of the world. Particular attention will be paid to American publications, which are rapidly rising in interest and importance.

In the department of **INTELLIGENCE** will be inserted accounts of the public proceedings of Congregations and of Religious Associations; together with notices of **Parliamentary debates**, and measures, and of the acts of other deliberative bodies, which may relate to subjects of theological inquiry and of the rights of conscience. A place will likewise be assigned here occasionally for the proceedings of Foreign Churches, as well as for the insertion of abstracts of the Reports of the principal Religious and Philanthropic Societies in Great Britain and Ireland and our Colonies. The Conductors will feel grateful to intelligent Foreigners for any communications with which they may from time to time favour them on the state of religion and of theological literature, and on laws relating to the promulgation of opinions and the exercise of public worship, in their respective countries.

The **OBITUARY** department being found deeply interesting to the majority of readers, in every Periodical Miscellany, the Conductors of the New Series of the Monthly Repository purpose devoting to this part of the work a proportionable measure of their attention and care. To the communications which they may receive from Correspondents, they will occasionally add original biographical notices of eminent persons recently deceased.

From its circulating among an opulent and reading portion of the public in every part of the British dominions, on the continent of Europe and in America, the Monthly Repository will present an eligible channel for **ADVERTISEMENTS**, especially of

408 *Prospectus of New Series of Monthly Repository.*

Books; a circumstance to which the Conductors respectfully invite the attention of Authors and Publishers.

In mechanical execution it is intended that the New Series of the Monthly Repository shall not be inferior to the most respectable Periodical Publications. The price of the New Series will be the same as that of the old, although the number of pages will be increased.

The literary merits, and the general value, of the New Series of the Monthly Repository, must essentially depend upon the co-operation of those friends of the work who are qualified to enrich its pages with their productions; and the Conductors earnestly solicit their prompt and continued patronage. They trust, however, they may remark without offence, that the interest and the credit of the publication, and their own responsibility to the public, render it expedient that their powers of choice should be unrestricted, and that they should be at full liberty, in the exercise of their discretion, to decline the insertion of articles which may to them appear unsuitable to their purpose, without being expected to assign their reasons.

The Conductors will only add, that it will be their steady aim to render the New Series of the Monthly Repository worthy of the denomination to which they belong, by the Christian liberality of spirit it will display, and the learning and talents that will be enlisted in its execution; peculiarly acceptable to those who concur with them on the great principles of Religion and Morals, as the faithful expositor and advocate of their faith; and interesting also, in no small degree, to the reading public of all classes and opinions, from the nature and importance of the subjects it will comprise and discuss, and the various and useful information it will periodically communicate. Whilst they scruple not to avow that its primary purpose is to exhibit and recommend their own sentiments, it will be their anxious endeavour to exclude from it whatever is offensive in the bigotry of party spirit, and to dedicate it, to the best of their judgment and ability, to the furtherance of the sacred cause of Religious Freedom, of Christian Truth and Virtue, and, as the result of the whole, of the permanent Happiness of the human race.

. It is requested that all Communications should be addressed to the Conductors, at the Monthly Repository Office, No. 3, Walbrook Buildings, Walbrook, London.

G. SMALLFIELD, PRINTER, HACKNEY.

THE
Christian Reformer.

No. CXLIII.] NOVEMBER, 1826.

[Vol. XII.]

On French Oaths. By MARIA EDGEWORTH.

[Written in the year 1815.]

[From "The Amulet, or Christian and Literary Remembrancer," for 1827; a beautiful little volume, designed for a New Year's Gift. See *Mon. Repos.* for October, pp. 616—620.]

AMONG the many baneful effects of the French Revolution, the disregard of oaths which it has produced in France, is the most deplorable. On every new revolution there was a new oath. This seems to have been the grand resource of their politicians, the favourite amusement of their populace, till at last the words "I swear—We swear!" repeated so frequently by the French on every change of government, or caprice of political fashion, have lost all power, all use, all meaning. In the Champ de Mars, at the commencement of the Revolution, at what they called the Grand Federation, they took an oath to be faithful to their constitution and their King. How this oath was kept we too well remember! Then a new oath was taken to the Directory, another to the Consulate, another to the Emperor—to the great Emperor of the French, and to the little King of Rome! When Bonaparte was defeated and dethroned, and Louis the Eighteenth—Louis le désiré, returned, fresh oaths were eagerly sworn to their legitimate sovereign, and he was hailed as the best of kings; and to all the Bourbons fidelity was vowed voluntarily and vehemently. But no sooner did Bonaparte return from Elba, than all their oaths, though made with the most theatric enthusiasm, the most tremendous adjurations, were all violated and forgotten.

Those very persons who had sworn to devote themselves to die in defence of their lawful sovereign—to stand to him, to the last—to spill the last drop of their blood in proof of their loyalty—deserted him at his utmost need. Princes, dukes, marshals, senators, soldiers, all hurried to give a new oath of fidelity to Napoleon; and now the emperor himself has been called upon to take an oath of adherence to the constitution, and Bonaparte swears to Carnot, and Carnot to Bonaparte, and the whole nation resolve to act

the old disgusting farce over again. "Because of swearing, the land mourneth," said the prophet; but the Parisians find, that because of swearing, the land rejoiceth. Formerly they all swore on the Champ de Mars, and now they have all sworn on the Champ de Mai; and according to their own fulsome phraseology, "they that day presented a scene truly touching—they formed a grand and imposing spectacle for the stranger and for all Europe." Yes, on the Champs de Mai, at a fête at the Champs Elysées, in the midst of princes and monarchs, and belles, and beaux, and eagles, and flowers, and amphitheatres, and booths, and fountains flowing with wine, and orchestras for music, and stages for singers, and stages for dancers, and stages for amusing philosophy, and feats of horsemanship, and rockets, and balloons, and combustibles, and confectionary, and pâtés, and pullets, and sausages, and geese, and turkeys, and soaped ropes, and merry andrews—the united people interrupted their emperor's speech with cries of—"We swear!" Cries of "We swear!" a thousand times repeated,—cries universally prolonged of "We swear!" resounded throughout the assembly; and the great nation have sworn by all that is absurd—by all that is sacred—by that honour which is dearer to Frenchmen than their lives—by that liberty which they never knew how to use—by that English constitution which none of them ever understood—by that God in whom few of them believe. All this would we ridiculous, if it were not abominable. It is truly abominable to see a nation, even of our enemies, so degraded. There is no word but a word of their own invention, that can describe their condition: *demoralized*, thank Heaven! is a word scarcely understood in England. It describes a situation hardly to be comprehended by Englishmen. To the people of France, an oath has lost its sanctity, and with its sanctity its power and its utility. It is no longer awful as an appeal to Heaven; it is no longer binding as a contract between men; it is no longer useful as the bond of society; that great bond is broken and gone.

The good and the wise in France—(that there are both we believe: we do not, with vulgar prejudice, involve the whole in the folly and guilt of a part of a nation)—the good and wise in France feel, as strongly as we can do, the disgrace and peril of the situation to which their country is reduced: peril greater than the perils of war—disgrace to which no foreign enemy, no defeat in arts or arms could

have reduced any country—from which no victory, no triumph, can in our days redeem their people as to the past, or secure them as to the future. The want of national morality and national religion—the want of the grand social security of an oath—cannot be repaired by armies, nor by battles, nor by edicts, nor by constitutions, nor by the wish or will of any man or set of men upon earth. The belief of the truth of asseveration no human power can impose on the mind. The violation of the sanctity of oaths cannot be forgotten at pleasure: nor can the last solemnity of an oath be suddenly restored by any ceremonies or by any form of words.

When once the people have been taught, as the French people have been taught, by notorious precedents and frequent example, to think lightly of perjury, what can afterwards touch their conscience?—what shall restrain their conduct?—what can ensure respect to any laws, or fidelity to any government? This generation must pass away,—a new generation, better educated, with principles of virtue and religion, must be formed—before there can be hope or security for public faith or social order and happiness in France. And years must pass away, and examples of stability of principles—of regard to their political engagements—must be given to the neighbouring nations before France can with them re-establish her national character.

At this moment we ask—and we ask the question not in the spirit of reproach or reviling—Is there any country in the civilized world, who would willingly exchange national character with France? Would England? Would Ireland? Would any Englishman—would any Irishman, accept for his country all the treasures which France has been permitted to accumulate in her days of conquest?—the far-famed Venetian Horses, the Apollo, the Venns, or all the statues and all the pictures which her rapine could wrest from all the despoiled countries of Europe—would he accept of them all, upon condition that England should take with them the disgrace which France has brought upon her national character, or stand the hazard of that peril, political and social, moral and religious, which she has incurred? Every Briton would, we believe, scorn the offer, and ask—or feel, “What are all these? Baubles, compared with our reputation for good faith, our integrity, our moral and religious character, the real strength and security of a nation.” Long may such be the warm feeling, and, better far, the

steady principle of our countrymen ! And that it may be, let us strengthen our respect, our reverence for oaths, by all the combined powers of education, law, opinion, and, above all, religious observance. To contribute somewhat to this great effect, is in the power of every individual in this country, whatever his fortune or his poverty, his rank or his humble situation may be: for the poorest man in the land may shew his respect for an oath, and support that respect by his example, as well as the richest: he has temptations which the rich have not; he has opportunities which the rich have seldom; his evidence for or against his neighbour, is, in this country and these times, frequently called for. Much rests upon a poor man's oath.

The violation, the invasion of an oath, is, if possible, more criminal, more disgraceful, the better the education; the higher the means of information, the greater, the safer the opportunities of fraud enjoyed by the individual. Let this consciousness press, in public and private, strongly upon those, in whatever rank of life, who are called upon to take what are called oaths of office—custom-house oaths—oaths of form even. Let all consider, that mental reservation in taking an oath, is fraud to man and falsehood to God;—that it is in vain that they try to excuse themselves in this sacrifice of principle to interest: their conscience will upbraid them—the small, still voice will be heard. In vain they screen themselves from the temporal obloquy, by a quibble, or the construction of words—by pleading custom, or looking to numbers who share and countenance the guilt. There must be no paltering with an oath. The example of the strictness of integrity, in taking and abiding by oaths of office, would in every country—in this country of Ireland—be of more efficacy, more real advantage to the good order and prosperity of the kingdom, than any who are accustomed to merely fiscal calculations, than all who are not habituated to large moral and political views, can possibly believe or comprehend.

But it is not only those who take oaths—rich or poor, high or low—whom we should most anxiously adjure upon this important subject: when we spoke of guarding our reverence for oaths by law and institution, we looked to those who formed the institutions and who frame the laws of our country. Let them consider well the importance of their task, the responsibility of their situation. Instead of multiplying restriction upon restriction—penalty upon

penalty—oath upon oath, let them so legislate as to avoid, as far as possible, holding out to the poor the temptation, the opportunity, for evasion or fraud. Let them consider, that multiplying oaths is multiplying, certainly, the possibility, and too frequently the probability, of perjury. Let them consider, that the respect for an oath is necessarily diminished by their frequency; that their power is inversely as their number; that their solemnity is lost if they are brought down from the high to the low concerns of life; and that it is well worthy of the legislator and the moralist—perhaps also of the financier and the politician—to sacrifice even excise to morality, and revenue to religion.

The Confession of an Unitarian.

(Rom. x. 9; 1 John iv. 15.)

I BELIEVE in one God, the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, the Son of Man and Son of God; who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried: the third day God raised him from the dead; he afterwards ascended into heaven, and now sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father of glory. I believe in the sleep of death, in the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust, in a day of judgment, and in a future state of retribution according to the deeds done in the body.

R. W. W

Hay, Brecknockshire, October 16, 1826.

Scriptural Prayers and Sermons.

The prayer of David, 1 Chron. xvii. 16.

of Solomon, 1 Kings viii. 22.

of Hezekiah, 2 Kings xix. 15.

of Ezra, ch. ix. 5.

of Nehemiah, ch. i. 4.

of Jeremiah, ch. xxxii. 16.

of Daniel, ch. ix. 16.

of Jesus Christ, John xvii:

of the Apostles, Acts iv. 23.

Christ's sermon on the Mount, Matt. v. vi. vii.

Peter's sermon to the Jews, Acts ii. 22.

Peter's sermon to Cornelius, x. 34.

Paul's sermon at Ephesus, xiii. 16.

Paul's sermon at Athens, xvii. 22.

I have carefully read over these prayers, and find that not one of them is addressed to the Holy Trinity, or to God the Son, or to God the Holy Ghost, but all of them to Jehovah, the God of heaven. In regard to the sermons, they are all upon practical religion, and do not contain any of those doctrines which are called peculiar doctrines of the gospel, but which, as being founded on the Thirty-nine Articles, ought to be called by their proper name, viz., the peculiar doctrines of the Convocation.

R. W. W.

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The Character of Alla Bhye.

(Taken from Sir John Malcolm's account of Central India, by a gentleman, one of the Society of Friends, residing at Bristol.)

AMONG the portraits with which he (Sir John Malcolm) has presented us, one of the most pleasing as well as most remarkable, is that of Alla Bhye, who married into the Holker family, and on the death of her husband, ascended the throne, in 1766, and reigned for the long period of 30 years.

Sir John Malcolm dwells on the character of this illustrious lady, as a model of all that is just, magnanimous, and wise, and her conduct, as he represents it, seems fully to justify his eulogium. Her reign was the commencement of a new and brilliant era, of prosperity and peace, it was a gleam of happiness, such as had seldom shone on that ill-fated country, over which her good genius was now to preside, with such felicity and glory.

The spirit of moderation and justice, which ever ruled in her councils, quelled all opposition. She was regular in the dispatch of business, sat daily in the open court for the administration of justice, was naturally inclined to gentleness and clemency, and was only severe when just occasions required it. Order and economy reigned through every branch of the revenue department, and a great part of her income was expended in works of charity and religion. Her whole reign, indeed, presents one continued and striking illustration of the ascendancy of worth and wisdom among mankind. *These* were the main pillars of her throne, the true foundation of her power. It was not by her armies, but by the force of her character, that she ruled and preserved her dominions in peace, in a time of general confusion and trouble.

Sir John Malcolm, conversing with an intelligent Brahmin respecting the character of this Princess, ventured

to question the propriety of such a liberal expenditure on religious edifices ; to which the latter replied by asking " whether Alla Bhye, by spending double the money on an army that she did on charity and good works, could have preserved her country in a state of profound peace, while she rendered her subjects happy and herself adored ? No person," he added, " doubts the sincerity of her piety ; but if she had merely possessed *worldly wisdom*, she could have devised no means so admirably calculated to effect the object. I was," this person concluded, " in one of the Princess's offices at Poonah, during the last years of her administration, and know well what feelings were excited at the mere mention of her name. Among the princes of her own nation it would have been looked upon as sacrilege to have become her enemy, or indeed not to have defended her against any hostile attempt. She was considered by all in the same light. The Nizan of the Deckan, and Tipoo Sultan, granted her the same respect as the Paishwas ; and Mahomedans joined with Hindoos in prayers for her long life and prosperity."

Among her own subjects, Alla Bhye never experienced the slightest disturbance : there could not, indeed, be any opposition to an authority that was continually exercised in acts of beneficence and justice.

" The fond object of her life," says Sir John Malcolm, " was to promote the prosperity of all around her. She rejoiced when she saw bankers, merchants, farmers and cultivators rise to affluence, and so far from deeming their increased wealth a ground of exaction, she considered it a legitimate claim to increased favour and protection."

Sir John Malcolm details several anecdotes in confirmation of the character of this distinguished Princess ; and states that he collected his information from all classes, who vied with each other in their veneration for her memory. Among others he mentions the domestic of Alla Bhye who attended her person. He was at the time near 90 years of age, and his reverence exceeded all bounds.

Alla Bhye was tried by severe domestic afflictions, and we have a most affecting account of the death of her daughter, who voluntarily consigned herself to the flames, on the funeral pile of her deceased husband. This dreadful scene was witnessed by her mother, and was detailed to Sir John Malcolm in all its tragical particulars by numerous eye-witnesses.

Hymn. By JOHN BOWRING, Esq.

[From Ackermann's "Forget Me Not, a Christmas and New Year's Present for 1827;" an elegant and valuable volume for presentation. See *Mon. Repos.* for October, pp. 615, 616.]

I CANNOT always trace the way
Where Thou, Almighty One! dost move;
But I can always, always say,
That God is love.

When Fear her chilling mantle flings
O'er earth, my soul to heaven above,
As to her sanctuary, springs,
For God is love.

When Mystery clouds my darken'd path,
I'll check my dread, my doubts reprove;
In this my soul sweet comfort hath,
That God is love.

The entanglement which restless thought,
Mistrust, and idle reasonings prove,
Are thus unravelled and unwrought—
For God is love.

Yes! God is love—a thought like this
Can every gloomier thought remove,
And turn all tears, all woes, to bliss—
For God is love.

*On Private and Family Prayer.*

SIR,

October 23, 1826.

THE perusal of two excellent letters in your *Christian Reformer*, from Mr. R. Wright, to the Unitarians in the North-east District, on personal religion and family devotion, has induced me to commit to paper some thoughts which were first produced in my mind by hearing different persons allege as an excuse for the neglect of private prayer, that the family, in which they resided assembled round the domestic altar and offered their united tribute of prayer and praise; and from hearing others assert, that an attention to private devotion supersedes family worship. It appears to me, that these excuses for the neglect of one duty by the performance of another, imply a disrelish for these exercises of piety, or they arise from inattention to the subject altogether; for, according to my ideas, private and family devotion are separate duties, and peculiar ad-

vantages are annexed to the right discharge of each ; I say the *right* discharge, for I fear prayer is too often engaged in as a thing of course, and that the lips utter words in which the heart is little interested. As prayer is, or ought to be, an address of the heart and the understanding to Him who sees in secret, it requires that the best powers of the mind and the best affections of the heart be called into exercise ; and where this is the case, the advantages of private devotion must be peculiarly felt ; it is an individual act, and cannot find its *substitute* in social worship : “ the heart only knoweth its own bitterness,” its own weakness, its own wants ; and what so consolatory, so animating, as the intercourse which is held in secret between the creature and the Creator ? What is so calculated to confirm the feelings of pious gratitude and trust, of resignation and hope, to establish good resolutions and virtuous habits, and to strengthen the power of resisting evil ones, as are those addresses to the Author of all good, and the Searcher of all hearts, which arise from a conviction of our dependence and his universal providence, our weakness and constant liability to err, and his readiness to hear and power to assist ? Family devotion, however well conducted, cannot take in the situation and feelings of every individual ; the addresses must be general. In the above remarks, I have not considered private devotion as a duty enjoined by Jesus, who said, “ Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret.” This to his sincere disciples is an additional motive for the practice. He, who knew what was in man, felt the advantage of private intercourse with his Father in heaven, and foresaw that his followers would require his injunction, as well as his example, to stimulate them to the performance of this duty ; and if those who have hitherto lived in the neglect of it, would make trial of its advantages when properly discharged, they would not easily relinquish the practice.

But I proceed to the second part of the subject, namely, that in the opinion of some, private devotion sets aside the necessity of family worship. I am persuaded it is a reason offered by inconsideration ; but thoughtlessness in matters of religion should never be allowed ; if permitted, indifference will soon follow, and the step is short between *that* and a total neglect of those instrumental duties to which even the best Christians find it necessary to attend, in order to keep alive in their own minds, and in the breasts of

those around them, that flame of devotion which, without these aids, is so apt to grow dim, and finally to be extinguished.

As private devotion is an individual, so is family devotion a social act, and the advantages attending the practice of the latter as well as the former are many and great. What more rational, what more delightful, than the united homage of an assembled household to Him who is the Father of all the families on earth, and who has promised his special favour to those who unite to pay their vows to him? What so likely to produce feelings of piety in children and servants, the latter of whom would perhaps otherwise be without one sentiment of gratitude to the Author of all good, as the devout address of the parent or the master to him whose providence guards the night from evil, and provides for the wants and enjoyments of each succeeding day? What has an equal tendency to produce peace and harmony in a family, as the union of individuals under the same roof, in these exercises of piety, where all meet as equals, and all join in one act of prayer and praise, to him with whom is no respect of persons? What so likely to make domestics sober, honest and industrious, as to feel by these acts of devotion that they are in the presence of a Master in heaven, to whom they are accountable for their conduct in the situation which his providence has assigned them? And, as a lesser good, though still a *good*, what so well calculated to produce order and regularity in a house, as the beginning and ending every day with stated acts of worship? If by this practice, continued through a long life, the master or mistress of a family can hope that good has been produced in the feelings and conduct of only one individual, that by his or her means one immortal being has been turned from the error of his ways, how sweet will be the reflection in that hour when the adventitious circumstances which men so highly prize will avail nothing! But the probability is, that many will be led to reflect, that much good may be done by a punctual attention to family worship; but be this as it may, the performance of the duty will be accepted; and that Being who knows how to appreciate every act of piety, will reward and bless every effort of his faithful servants for the promotion of his glory and the advancement of religion.

A. Y.

Mr. Gilman's Sermon, at Charleston, on John i. 1 & 14.

[Concluded from p. 373.]

And where is the matter brought, my friends? I proposed to demonstrate, in the second head of my discourse, that these differences of interpretation may really agree in all that is of essential importance to religion and to salvation. It can be shewn, and it will be shewn in a few words. I will not call it a gross slander, I will not call it an abusive falsehood, but I will call it an unhappy error, which induces our opponents to represent us as bringing down the Saviour to the level of a mere man.* Along with them, we believe, it is true, that he had a human nature. But I have said enough this evening to shew you that, as we believe, immeasurable degrees of power and wisdom were poured out upon and closely connected with his human nature, by the Spirit of God. Supposing, now, that we went farther; supposing we took the single step more which our opponents demand us to take, on pain of denouncing against us eternal damnation: supposing we actually allowed that Jesus were God and man at one and the same moment†—should we really render his religion of more authority to us? Should we feel more constrained to obey his commands? Should we feel more gratitude to God for working rich provisions for our salvation? Should we feel a greater abhorrence for sin? for I take it to be impossible that any thinking being could suppose that Jehovah himself resigned his existence for our sins. Should we have any greater motives to pass lives of holiness and piety, here below, and to prepare for the eternal realities of another world? I solemnly say to all this, No. Because, in whatever degree we honour the Father, to that same degree it is clear we honour the Son and Messenger whom he has sent.

Nor, on the other hand, are we prepared for the uncharitable alternative of pronouncing all those idolaters, who thinking Jesus to be God, worship him so. Because, we

* By the expression *a mere man*, as applied to the Saviour, I mean, and I think our opponents generally mean, that he was unconnected in a supernatural manner with the Deity, and that his religion, like that of Mahomet, was purely of human origin.

† The difference between the two parties, for which Unitarians are so bitterly and unsparingly denounced and excommunicated, is simply this: Unitarians believe in the closest *union* between the Father and the Son; Trinitarians, as far as we can comprehend them, contend for a *unity*, or *identity*. It seems a question of arithmetic, rather than of true theology.

know, that they always make such explanations and modifications of the doctrine in their own minds, as to reduce it at last to the true Unity of the Godhead. We *know* that they worship in spirit and in truth the very same Being that we do, although we conceive them to be most unhappily attached* to a particular form of phraseology, which from early and long association is connected with pious ideas in their minds. There is therefore no reason why we should denounce and set at nought each other. There is no reason why we should make unceasing efforts to impair one another's good reputations, to paralyze each other's efforts in doing the good which our talents and opportunities permit us to do on earth—to weaken each other's hands in the cause of holiness and righteousness—to breathe stains in little whispers, or to make assaults in thundering anathemas on one another's characters, in the miserable rivalry of destroying our mutual influence. If we differ in one particular, we unite in a hundred. If our speculative metaphysics are at war, our practical morality, our evangelical spirit, may meet together and embrace each other. In all the great topics of Christian exhortation, we are alike. God, in one person, is as much the hearer of prayer, is as powerful, as gracious, as merciful, as just, as holy, as righteous, as adorable, as God in three. Indeed, this is virtually allowed by our opponents themselves. They make three persons of the Trinity equal in every respect to each other, and each of them to be an independent and infinite Deity. Of course the God we worship is at least equal in all respects to theirs. I might, if time permitted, exhibit many more points, on which we could agree in amicable discussion, and join together the right hand of Christian fellowship. The day will come, when the disciples of Jesus shall better understand each other, and shall learn not to magnify unavoidable differences of opinion into causes of alarm, mistrust, and bitter hatred. Even so, come Lord Jesus, with thy mild and heavenly, thy forbearing and charitable spirit, come quickly.

* For a striking picture of the confusion and difficulty, and even *shuddering* distress, with which thinking Trinitarians are sometimes afflicted in their attempts at prayer, see the beginning of Worcester's Bible News. [See also in the Christian Reformer, Vol. I. pp. 113—118, Dr. Watts's "Solemn Address to the Deity," in which is described the agony of this great and good man's mind, occasioned by the doctrine of the Trinity, which there is complete evidence to prove that he finally renounced. Consult Christian Reformer, I. 193—195, and II. 467—470. ED. OF CHRISTIAN REFORMER.]

Bear, as was proposed in the third place, with a few concluding lessons and reflections. Let not the Unbeliever, then, take comfort or assurance from the differences which exist among Christians. Whichever of our interpretations are right, or whichever are wrong, there is no shelter for wickedness or wilful obstinacy. We all agree that God has spoken to us in these latter days by his Son; we all agree that the heaviest denunciations are pronounced against sin, and that the most alluring rewards are held out to the obedient. Even in the very difficult passage of Scripture which has exercised our attention this evening, the most jarring explications unite at least in making God as the author and basis of the Gospel, and thereby lending an infinite sanction and force to its motives and commands. Besides, what is gained by renouncing religion with all its difficulties, all its perplexities, and all its liabilities to imperfection, if we take in exchange nothing but the miserable darkness of unbelief? Give me but one particle, one little seed of faith, and it shall remove mountains of doubt from my soul, illuminate whole regions of darkness in which nature lies, almost annihilate the calamities to which life is incident, and make my bosom swell with the blessed anticipations of eternity. But take away even this grain of faith, and I am but a brother to the worm, the sport of every accident, a creeping, ignorant, forlorn wretch of a day, and worse than a poor brute in death. With this contrast before him, the Unbeliever may not plead for his excuse the unhappy differences among those who are striving for the truth.

Once more. Is it too much to hope, that our brethren of the Trinitarian faith * may have learned something from the discussions to which our text has been subjected? I do not, of course, surely, indulge the romantic and, perhaps, the undesirable expectation, that any whose faith is rooted and grounded by long habit, by strong associations, and by an extensive course of a particular kind of reading, have had their convictions overthrown in a single hour. But I do trust that such persons have at least seen, that we have *something* to urge in our own defence; that instead of lightly and irreverently handling the Bible, we confidently appeal to it, comparing Scripture with Scripture,

* This discourse was first preached at a public evening lecture, and preparatory to the administration of the Lord's Supper.

and vindicating its just claims against interpolations and corruptions on the one hand, and infidelity on the other. Especially, I trust, they have seen, that there is nothing in our systems of interpretation essentially injurious to religion or morals, and that we have some claims to be heard and fairly answered, before we are condemned. Besides, suppose that the denunciations and odious descriptions levelled at us, should have their desired effect, and force us over to the side of nominal Trinitarianism. There is a previous question to be settled among yourselves—Which is the true standard of orthodoxy? There is the scheme of the great Dr. Samuel Clarke,* that the second person of the Trinity derived his existence from the first; there is the indwelling scheme of Dr. Watts, that the Father dwells in the Son, in the same manner as the soul dwells in the body; there is the Sabellian scheme, that the Father, Son and Spirit, are different names only for the same being, the one living and true God; there is the Swedenborgian scheme, that there is but one God in one person; there is the tritheistical scheme, set on foot by a great philosopher of Alexandria in Egypt, that there are three equal Gods in three equal persons, but only one God; not to mention innumerable shades and modifications and combinations of all these different and clashing schemes, such as Professor Stuart's of our own country, who maintains that there was no Son of God until Jesus was born of Mary, and Dr. Miller's, who insists, that the Son of God was born from all eternity.† How can you condemn the humble Christian inquirer, who, appalled at this formidable array of opposing systems, seeks refuge in the plain language of Scripture, and builds his faith on the formula of the Saviour himself, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent"?

Yes, my Christian friends, who expect on the approaching Sabbath to surround the table of your Lord and Master, you will feel grateful to God that you can perform that duty without any distressing and distracting ideas. You see enough in the Saviour to command your reverence, obedience and affection. His words with you have the authority of heaven. His example is endearing, engaging and efficacious, because you believe that it is not too high for you humbly

* Belsham.

† See their letters to each other, recently published.

to imitate. His doctrines you receive into your souls as the dew of inspiration. His proclamations of pardon from on high excite you to repentance, because you believe him to be the delegated Messenger of God. His character you find an inexhaustible theme of profitable and delightful contemplation. His death you regard as the seal of his ministry, as a sacrifice called for on account of the sinful state of the world, and as a necessary forerunner of that glorious resurrection which demonstrated him to be the Son of God, and on which you hang treasures of living hope. All this you think sufficient to induce you to commemorate him, by obeying his last command. You have named his name. Oh, remember the privilege! You have named his name. Oh, remember the responsibility! Be willing to bear his cross through good report and evil report. He has gone to prepare many mansions in heaven. Will he deny them to those who believe in his own words, and simply *for* believing in his own words, *My Father is greater than I*? Will *God* deny them to those who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, honour and immortality? Let the Apostle Paul reply: "God will render to every man according to his deeds. Unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath: Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil; of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile. But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good; (hear this broad, this liberal promise!) to every man that *worketh good*, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile. For there is no respect of persons with God." (Rom. ch. ii.) AMEN.

An Evening in Judea.

[From "The Harp of Zion, a Series of Lyrics founded on the Hebrew Scriptures. By WILLIAM KNOX, Author of the 'Songs of Israel.'"]

THE sun is set, and yet his light
Is lingering in the crimson sky,
Like memory, beautiful and bright,
Of holy men that die.

O'er Tabor's hill, o'er Baca's dale,
The shades of evening softly creep,
Softly as mother draws the veil
To wrap her infant's sleep.

The dews fall gently on the flower,
 Their freshening influence to impart,
 As Pity's tears, of soothing power,
 Revive the drooping heart.

The twilight star from Hermon's peak
 Comes mildly o'er the glistening earth;
 And weary hirelings joy to seek
 Their dear domestic hearth.

Who sends the sun to ocean's bed?
 Who brings the nightshade from the west?
 Who bids the balmy dews be shed?
 Who gives the weary rest?

Even He who, at the season due,
 Sends forth the sun's returning light,
 Whose mercies every morn are new,
 Whose faithfulness each night.

The Edinburgh Review on the Church of England.

THIS most popular and influential of our periodical works has begun to speak out boldly with regard to our National Religious Establishment. An article entitled "The Church of England" in No. LXXXVIII., just published, has excited great attention. It shews what our fellow-subjects, the Presbyterians of the North, think of "our excellent church," as the phrase is at Visitation feasts. It is a review of a pamphlet ("Letters on the Church, by an Episcopalian," 8vo.) which seems from the account here given to be an able and useful performance. The scope and object of the work is stated by the Reviewer in a single sentence: "It is, to prove that all Religious Establishments, by which one particular form of worship is especially protected and favoured by the civil government, and in return is entirely subjected to its controul, are at once contrary to the interests of religion and to those of civil society; that the consequences of what is called the Alliance of Church and State are mischievous alike to *both* parties; that a State, as such, ought to be of no religion at all; and that therefore it ought not to identify itself with one sect, and to tolerate all others; but to protect all, and prefer, and discountenance none."—P. 491.

The Reviewer quotes from the pamphlet the following

remarks, which he pronounces "sensible," on the English laws relating to Marriages :

"Marriage consists, in our view, of two things—a civil contract, which makes the offspring legitimate in the eye of the law, and involves temporal obligations,—and a vow before God. Now, with respect to the first, it ought to be competent to persons of all persuasions to form the civil contract, without any violence to their religious principles, however erroneous, and without any interference with religious rites whatever. Oliver Cromwell was right for once, in causing the civil contract to be made before the civil magistrate. Neither Jews, nor Turks, nor Christians, can object to this, if they choose to live under the laws of the land. The magistrate, therefore, ought to certify and register the due contraction of this engagement. But as for the religious rite, that should be left to the religious community to which each person belongs. I cannot but think in the case, for instance, of the Unitarians, that there is both a species of persecution and profanation committed. I need not tell you that I abhor the faith of the Unitarians ;—so I do that of the infidel Jews and Mahometans ;—but I think that none of these should be *compelled*, in order to contract a marriage, to be witnesses and partakers of a ceremony which their conscience condemns ; and it is, under these circumstances, a degradation to the minister, and a profanation of the ceremony, that it should take place. * * * But many of the English clergy seem to think, with Paley, that the solemnization of a marriage by a justice of the peace, (though without *forbidding* any previous or subsequent religious ceremony which the consciences of the parties might dictate,) was calculated to degrade the clergy. They *stickle* for their exclusive right of solemnizing marriage between those who think the ceremony blasphemous, and who blaspheme the doctrines implied in it ! One has scarcely patience with men who thus perversely glory in degradation. They remind me in many points of the dog in the fable, who mistook the clog round his neck for a badge of honourable distinction."

—P. 496.

On the case of the Unitarians, with regard to the marriage-laws, here referred to, the Reviewer observes,

"What has been done, and what is likely to be done hereafter, with regard to the disgraceful state of things here alluded to, affords a fair sample of the pertinacity with

which a certain party successfully defend every abuse in the ecclesiastical institutions of England. Once and again have the Unitarians petitioned Parliament to be allowed the indulgence actually enjoyed by the Jews and Quakers, that of legally solemnizing their own marriages, without employing the ministers or the ritual of the English Established Church. Once and again have their petitions been rejected! One learned Prelate is reported to have said, that he would not give them credit for any scruples of conscience about the matter! and Parliament itself seemed to be of opinion, that it was better that their consciences should suffer violence, than that the venerable rust which during two centuries and a half, has incrustated the institutions of the Church should be injured by any profane attempts to purify them. So the question rests for the present. But as the Unitarians will probably persevere, their individual complaint is likely in time to be listened to,—and, in the usual comprehensive spirit of our legislation, we shall have a sort of *privilegium* enacted, to redress that particular grievance—the enemies of reform gladly yielding thus far, in order to obviate a more alarming evil, the removal of abuses by a general law founded on the plain principles of wisdom and justice. Nor is their policy a bad one; for, amidst the prevailing selfishness of mankind, general principles have little chance of finding an advocate, when once individual interests are satisfied.”—Pp. 496, 497.

Having pointed out and commented on with approbation the contents of the pamphlet, the Reviewer proceeds to take notice of a few things in the actual constitution of the Church of England which prove the necessity of a further reformation. He touches first on the want of sympathy between the Church and the people of England.

“The Church of England is unpopular. It is connected with the Crown and the Aristocracy; but it is not regarded with affection by the mass of the people;—and this circumstance greatly lessens its utility, and has powerfully contributed to multiply the number of Dissenters. To this day it feels the effects of the peculiar conjuncture at which it was established. It was the child of the Civil Government, when that Government was a Despotism; and it learnt to echo the language and to copy the arbitrary proceedings of its patrons, till it shared with them the indignation of the people, and fell with them in one common

overthrow. Thus the Church has never thoroughly harmonized with the popular part of our Constitution; and we have been often amused, by observing the soreness with which some English clergymen still speak of the House of Commons and its Committees—as if the terrors of the Long Parliament were still haunting their memories. This notorious spirit of Toryism would of itself tend to alienate the affections of the people from the clergy as a body; but other causes have combined to aggravate the mischief.

“The system of Church patronage, for instance, while it makes many of the clergy directly dependent on the rich and great, makes all of them independent of popular favour; and their course of life keeps them somewhat remote from the contact of public opinion. Again, the rank which the English clergy hold in society is often prejudicial to their influence with the poor. Birth, habit and education, have identified them with the higher orders;—they share their feelings, and enjoy their pleasures; and they sometimes are ignorant, from mere inexperience, of the language and manner which are most intelligible to the common people, and most readily find the way to their hearts. Hence has arisen the peculiar unpopularity of their style and manner of preaching. It trembles to offend a cultivated taste and a critical judgment:—it is generally, therefore, free from gross extravagances, but is, beyond all other preaching, tame, and unimpressive to uneducated minds. The same character prevails in their writings;—their Tracts, intended for circulation among the poor, are mostly stiff, and have about them an air of lecturing and prosing like that of a condescending superior, addressing readers almost of a different species from himself.

“Other causes have their weight with the middling classes of society in indisposing them to the existing Establishment. The great incomes and the pluralities enjoyed by the higher clergy cannot but appear excessive;—the difficulty of procuring places of worship, and ministers of the Established Church, to meet the increased population of the country in large towns and in manufacturing districts, argues something deficient in its actual constitution: And wherever the blame *ought* most to fall, the general impression is unfavourable to the Church, from the feeling, that while it absorbs a large part of the revenue of the country, it does not sufficiently perform its work. The old laws against Conventicles, and the inflexible strictness with

which the service of the Church is confined to the prescribed forms of the Liturgy, place its ministers also at a disadvantage, when opposed to the unfettered and flexible activity of the Dissenters. Whilst any other Christian teacher may address an audience wherever he can find one, and in the language which he may judge most appropriate to the occasion, a clergyman of the Establishment may preach only within the walls of his parish Church ;—nay, he may not preach there, unless he choose also to read the morning or evening prayer at the same time—a regulation which makes it impossible to open the Churches to any purpose in country parishes on any other day than Sunday. We are not now discussing the propriety or impropriety of these and similar regulations ;—we are only asserting, that they tend to make the Church less popular than we wish it to be :—and when it is notorious that no steps have been taken for the last two centuries to amend or improve its institutions, it is not unnatural that it should be taxed with indolence and indifference, and with thinking more of its dignity than its duties.”—Pp. 502—504.

Next, the Reviewer remarks on some things in the present state of the Church of England which are bad in themselves, independent of any effect which they may produce on public opinion. For example, “The Church of England is Exclusive, and has, in many instances, provoked the separation from it, which it affects at once to lament and condemn.” Again, “The Government and External Constitution of the Church are full of abuses, and bear divers marks of the mistaken notions and extreme misgovernment of the times in which they were formed, and of those which neglected to amend them. It may never have occurred to some of our readers,” (the Reviewer proceeds—but happily we cannot even imagine the same thing of the readers of the *CHRISTIAN REFORMER*,) “that the Greek word, *Ekklēsia*, which we translate ‘Church,’ was the peculiar term used to denote the general assembly of the people in the old democracies ; that it essentially expresses ‘a popularly constituted meeting ;’ and that such, in great measure, was the original constitution of the Christian society. We need not say with what different associations our English Version of it is now connected ; we need not ask what *popular* elements are left, in a body in which the people have no voice at all, either by themselves or their representatives ; where the chief officers, the Bishops, are

appointed by the Crown, and are accountable to no one but the Archbishops and the Crown for the manner in which they discharge their trust." "Then," says the Reviewer, "comes the system of Pluralities and Dispensations,—the relics of the worst times of Popery, which the Protestant Church of England retains, even in the nineteenth century. One person may hold two benefices, if they are within forty miles of one another; and the distance is always computed, not by the number of miles along the road, but as if the incumbent could fly with the crow, or ride on a steeple-hunt from one of his cures to the other;—to say nothing of the absurdity of fixing on a such a distance as the maximum to be allowed by law;—for if a minister can discharge his duties in a parish forty miles distant from him, he may just as easily fulfil them in one that is four hundred. Again, those persons who have taken degrees in civil law, and the domestic chaplains of noblemen, are permitted to hold two benefices. In the one case, this indulgence was granted to encourage a study which the clergy in ancient times always laboured to propagate; but now, amid the ignorance of the Civil law which prevails in England, and when the degree of Doctor of Laws does not necessarily imply an acquaintance with its simplest rudiments, its continuance is utterly ridiculous. In the other, it marks how little the Reformation in England was able to correct abuses patronized by the Aristocracy; while the readiness with which the friends of the Church acquiesced in them, shows how greatly they wanted some of the most essential qualities in the character of perfect reformers."

An extraordinary defect in the Church of England, observed by all intelligent foreigners, is *the total want of any system of Education, peculiarly fitted for those who are to become ministers of the church*, and this is animadverted on with spirit by the Reviewer. A parish boy is taught the trade of a shoemaker before he is expected to be entrusted with his neighbours' shoes, but the souls of the whole parish are entrusted to a priest who, for any thing his teachers at the University know to the contrary, may not be able to read so as to be heard and understood by the parishioners in the pew next the desk. We say nothing of his possible ignorance of divinity, or of the actual ignorance of it and of the disinclination for theological studies which is so notorious amongst the clergy.

The object of the CHRISTIAN REFORMER, as expressed

in the mottoes printed monthly on our covers, is to promote church-reform, and we hail the accession of such a powerful coadjutor as the *Edinburgh Review*. The *Review* expresses our own mind towards the conclusion of the article: "—the main object at present to be accomplished is to draw the public assention to the state of the Church, and to show to every man's understanding that it ought not to be left as it is. Above all, we wish to dispel that cloud of prejudice which, on this question, besets the mind of so large a portion, not of the clergy only, but of the gentlemen of England—to expose some of those parrot-like phrases, which, to the disgrace of human reason, so often bind men's minds with a secret and sovereign charm. Such are the expressions which we so often hear of the 'Constitution in Church and State,' of its 'venerable Establishment,' of its 'heroic Martyrs,' its 'pious and learned Reformers,' and of 'the mild and tolerant spirit of its Doctrines and its Ministers.' We call these *parrot-like phrases*—because, as they are commonly used, they are all either untrue or irrelevant. 'The Constitution in Church and State'! Why it is like the feet of the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which were made part of iron, and part of miry clay; the State strong and sound, gradually perfected by the care of successive generations, carefully watched and continually repaired;—the Church patched up in a hurry three hundred years ago, out of elements confessedly corrupted, and ever since allowed to subsist, unlooked to and unmended, as if, like the water of the Thames, it would grow purer by the mere lapse of time."

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The Fountain of Marah. By MRS. HEMANS.

[From "The Amulet." See *Christian Reformer*, p. 391.]

"And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter.

"And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?

"And he cried unto the Lord; and the Lord showed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet."—EXOD. xv. 23—25.

WHERE is the tree the prophet threw
 Into the bitter wave?
 Left it no scion where it grew,
 The thirsty soul to save?

Hath Nature lost the hidden power
Its precious foilage shed ?
Is there no distant eastern bower,
With such sweet leaves o'erspread ?

Nay, wherefore ask ?—since gifts are ours,
Which yet may well imbue
Earth's many troubled founts with showers
Of Heaven's own balmy dew.

Oh ! mingled with the cup of grief,
Let faith's deep spirit be,
And every prayer shall win a leaf
From that blest healing tree !

Quaker Epistle Extraordinary.

WE have not inserted in this volume the Quakers' Yearly Epistle, there being little in it that is interesting to the general reader. It is in every respect a poor composition. The two passages that follow are the only parts worthy of being extracted.

“We feel tenderly for such of our dear friends as come together in very small companies in their religious meetings, but we earnestly desire that they may not relax in their diligence, or allow either their solitary situation, or their outward concerns, to prevent a due and punctual attendance of these meetings.”

“In the course of the last year the circumstances of the commercial inhabitants of this country have been such as to involve numbers in great distress and perplexity. Members of our Society, some, we fear through their own imprudence, have partaken of this calamity. We feel for such as are in trouble, and desire that their sufferings may be conducive to their lasting benefit. To those who, in the management of their temporal concerns, are now struggling under difficulties, which it is possible are only fully known to themselves and to the Great Searcher of hearts, we would offer a word of encouragement and sympathy. We entreat you to act with prudence and uprightness, and so to live from day to day, that you can in humble trust place your whole dependence upon the Lord ; then may you entertain the consoling belief that His protecting care will be extended towards you. And may we all, dear friends, be so instructed by the things that have been suffered, as to fix our hearts upon ‘a treasure in the heavens that faileth not !’”

On the subject of the last paragraph, another Epistle was addressed to the Quaker body by the Yearly Meeting.

This, which has been sent us by a Friend, is truly excellent; and though not intended for distribution beyond the Society, we trust we shall be excused for laying it before our readers, with the view of drawing attention to its sound Christian advice.

To the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings of Friends in Great Britain and Ireland.

DEAR FRIENDS,

WHILST we have been engaged in examining into the state of our Society as conveyed through the answers to the Queries, our attention has been particularly turned to the subject of the fifth Query.* At the same time that we are not disposed to animadvert with censure on the conduct of those who may have given rise to the exceptions in the answers to this Query, we are anxious that what has occurred may be a warning to others. We feel for many who are brought into trouble, in some instances probably from unavoidable circumstances, and we are sensible that such should be the objects of our tender sympathy.

We entreat Friends frequently to inspect into the state of their affairs, and not to delay the performance of this duty, either from an apprehension that things are going on well, or from a fear to know how their accounts really stand. It is a practice which can be injurious to no one; but it has very frequently been seen, that had it been timely and regularly resorted to, it would in all probability have prevented grievous suffering. Those who hold the property of others, and this may be said to be the case more or less with most who are engaged in trade, are not warranted, on the principles of justice, in neglecting to inform themselves from time to time of the real situation of their affairs. If men conceal from their nearest connexions in life a knowledge of the actual state of their property, they may deprive themselves of salutary counsel, and of a kind participation in trouble; family expenses may be incurred and subsequent distress may ensue, which might have been avoided. And we particularly advise young persons to be cautious not to enter too hastily into business; and, from the time of their being thus engaged, to be very careful to make themselves well acquainted with their annual income and expenditure. This would be greatly facilitated by their early adopting and regularly pursuing a clear and methodical system of keeping their accounts, in regard both to trade and domestic expenses.

We know that the experience and sufferings of the past year in

* The fifth Query is, "Are friends just in their dealings, and punctual in fulfilling their engagements; and are they annually advised carefully to inspect the state of their affairs once in the year?"

his nation, have furnished many useful lessons to those who have escaped the troubles of which others have partaken; and we desire that these lessons may not be without their practical good effect. They should teach us not to trust in uncertain riches, and they should be a warning to parents to be careful how they enlarge their domestic establishments, and not to hold out to their children expectations of ease and abundance, nor to train them up in habits of delicacy and indulgence. O! that both parents and their offspring might fix their hopes of happiness on that which is substantial and eternal, and endeavour to be good stewards of the temporal blessings bestowed upon them. Such we believe to be the concern of many of our dear friends.

Among the evils of later times has been the practice of individuals trading beyond their capital, and that of carrying on their business by means of a fictitious credit:—practices very dangerous in their effects, and utterly inconsistent with that Christian moderation and contentment which the precepts of the gospel enjoin, and in which our true happiness consists.

It becomes those who are attached to the cause of Truth, who love our principles, and are desirous of promoting the best interests of our Society, to remember that they are not exempt from danger. Dear friends of this description, and especially you who are young, accept a word of caution offered to you in Christian love. If you attend not to the witness of God in your own hearts, and seek not to be delivered from the spirit of this world, you may, contrary to any apprehensions that you now entertain, be introduced into future trouble: you may obstruct your own usefulness in the Church, mar the designs of Infinite Wisdom concerning you, and, when it is too late, have bitterly to regret the want of timely withstanding the first temptations of the enemy.

And we would tenderly invite those who may have acquired a competency of outward substance, to watch the proper period at which they may withdraw from the cares of business, and when disengaged from the regular concerns of trade, to beware how they employ their property in investments which may involve them anew in care and anxiety. We affectionately desire that neither these nor other cares may disqualify them from acting the part of faithful stewards in the employment of their time, their talents, and their substance, or from being concerned above all things, through watchfulness unto prayer, to have their lamps trimmed, and oil in their vessels; that when the solemn close of life shall come, they may, through redeeming love and mercy, be prepared to enter into the joy of their Lord.

Signed in and on behalf of the Yearly Meeting, held in London, by adjournments from the 24th of the 5th month to the 1st of the 6th month inclusive, 1826.

JOSIAH FORSTER,
Clerk to the Meeting this Year,

Letters from the Rev. R. Wright, to the Unitarians in the North-east District.

LETTER VIII.

Trowbridge, November 7, 1826.

MY CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

IN addition to what I have taken the liberty of stating in my former letters, there are a few topics which I wish briefly to notice, and to which I solicit your attention.

I. Some of your churches may happen to be for a time without ministers, or their ministers may be confined by sickness, or be unavoidably absent from home; and this may happen when it is impracticable for neighbouring ministers to give them assistance, at least on the Lord's-day; it is therefore necessary for you to consider beforehand what is most proper to be done in such cases, and to prepare yourselves to do it. It ought to be a fixed maxim with you never to have your places of public worship shut at the usual time of assembling together on a Lord's-day. If you be without a regular minister, or if your minister be confined by sickness, or be absent from home, you ought still to meet together as usual and conduct the public service in the best manner in your power. If you have elders in your churches, it will be their place to take the lead and conduct the service on such occasions; if you have no elder, let such of the brethren as are thought best qualified be called on to preside and act on such emergencies. Surely in a Christian society of any standing, there must be some person capable of reading the Scriptures to his brethren, of conducting the devotional parts of the service in the absence of a minister, and of reading a discourse in public; and, with all the helps which may now be obtained both as to sermons and suitable books of devotion, it would be very wrong to omit the public service, merely on account of the absence of a person who has been appointed to do it regularly. You should always remember that public worship is not like an exhibition, of which you are merely to be spectators; but that it is a service in which you are immediately interested and required to have your hearts and minds engaged, whoever it be that takes the lead in conducting it. By cultivating a devotional spirit, and habituating yourselves to the conducting of family worship, you may prepare yourselves to assist in public on such occasions as I have mentioned. While

those whose views of religious truth are not so intelligible, and whose worship is not so simple as yours, conduct public services in the absence of their ministers, let it not be said that you either cannot or will not do it in such cases: and those who belong to the congregation should make a point of attending when the service is conducted by one of their brethren, and make it evident that it is to the worship they attend, and not merely to a minister who is appointed to officiate regularly.

2. Some of your churches experience pecuniary difficulties, and cannot make the provision for your ministers which their labours deserve, and which you would wish to make for them. If these difficulties cannot be removed, they may probably be diminished by proper exertions, and the adoption of judicious plans. Let it be impressed on your minds, not only that "the labourer is worthy of his hire," and that "they who preach the gospel should live by the gospel," but that it is for your benefit that your ministers should be kept as free as possible from worldly cares and embarrassments, and the fatigues and perplexities of worldly business, that they may be at leisure to give themselves to study and the work of the ministry, and feel themselves at liberty to attend more entirely to what concerns your spiritual edification. It must be a pleasure to you to see them and their families comfortable and respectable. Besides, they ought, if practicable, to be enabled to exercise hospitality, and to set an example of liberality to the poor, the sick, the infirm and the aged. I am far from censuring your conduct, my brethren, in reference to pecuniary exertions, for I know of no district where a better disposition has been shewn by churches to promote the interest of their ministers, according to their ability and means, than among you: still, perhaps in some places your plans may be capable of improvement, and your exertions of being rendered more effective. All the members of a congregation should do what they can to support the cause, and those who are in quite humble circumstances may best contribute their mite by monthly or even weekly subscriptions, which suitable persons may be appointed to receive, as is done among the Methodists, who it is well known raise considerable funds by small weekly contributions. It is likely more would be done; and some difficulties obviated in some churches, if every one did his part according to his ability: and allow me to ask, whether, while some persons in better

circumstances have all along shewn the greatest liberality, there are not others who have not contributed according to their means, and even some who have done scarcely any thing for the cause? I accuse no one, but I appeal to the consciences of you all. Let every individual ask himself whether he be contributing in proportion as God hath, in his providence, blessed him. I am anxious that fruit should abound to your profit, that you should lay up treasure in heaven, a good foundation against the time to come; for he that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly, and he that soweth plentifully shall reap plentifully. I trust, if some of your churches are in depressed circumstances while others are in a more flourishing condition, that the latter will, as was formerly the case, shew a readiness to assist and strengthen the former. If, after all, you feel difficulties which cannot at present be removed, do not despond; but go on steadily and zealously in the work of the Lord, and he will make even your difficulties work for your good, and in due time deliver you from all your troubles both as individuals and as churches. Do what you can, leave the rest to God, and fear not but all things will issue well.

3. In order to increase and strengthen your congregations, and to effect a revival of the cause among you, it is highly desirable, wherever it can be made practicable, that you should obtain openings for village preaching, and have occasional religious services at moderate distances from your regular places of worship, that the attention of strangers may be excited, and your hearers on the Lord's-day increased. The plan of village preaching has been found effectual among different parties of Christians, for the revival of country congregations when in a low state; I have witnessed the good effects of it in several instances, and earnestly recommend it to your consideration and adoption.

4. In some parts of your district you stand much in need of persons to act as occasional preachers, after the manner of those called local preachers among the Methodists, who are of essential importance among that now numerous body of Christians. Such preachers we have in some parts of the kingdom, and their labours have already been found beneficial to the cause. Considerable judgment and prudence is no doubt necessary in determining on the persons to be employed as occasional preachers: you must not engage all who may offer themselves, nor all who are capable of talking fluently; but make yourselves sure that their

moral character is correct, that they have a tolerable knowledge of the Scriptures, will act judiciously, and that their abilities are such as will not discredit the cause in which they engage. Wherever you can find such persons, encourage and bring them forward. They will be useful in supplying for your regular ministers when sick or from home, in officiating among those who have no regular minister, and in breaking up new ground.

5. Conference meetings were formerly carried on in some parts of your district with very good effect. In a congregation the members of which lived in several neighbouring villages, they were held alternately at the houses of different friends in those villages. I apprehend the revival of conference meetings among you would be useful, and help to promote the cause. They would cherish brotherhood and Christian fellowship, promote scriptural knowledge, stimulate zeal, and help to cultivate the talents of those who might become occasional preachers. If you wish to see a revival, and to bring your churches into a more prosperous state, you must use all possible means to effect this : and I am well persuaded village preaching, conference meetings, and what are called lay-preachers, as auxiliaries to the regular ministers, will be found means well adapted to the important purpose.

6. There are in some parts of your district detached individuals who are friends of the cause, and single families of Unitarians, who have no opportunity of uniting with any Unitarian congregation, or of regularly attending at any Unitarian place of worship. I beseech you, my brethren, so far as you can make it practicable, to attend to these sheep scattered in the wilderness, and do what you can to promote their edification. When I resided among you, I used to visit them occasionally, and preach in their houses, and sometimes had many hearers. And I beseech these detached individuals and families to stand fast in the faith of the one and only God, the Father, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord ; to bear their testimony to his truth in the circle in which they move, to keep up his worship in their families, and to do all they can to edify themselves and enlighten their neighbours. Wherever there are two or three persons who can unite, they should form themselves into a little society, meet together at fixed times, and let their light shine by openly worshiping God according to the dictates of their understanding and consciences, and by

holding forth the word of life according to the ability which God hath given them. A few persons thus uniting have, in several instances, proved the nucleus of a future congregation, and been the means of establishing Unitarianism in a populous city, or of diffusing the pure light of the gospel over a dark and benighted tract of country.

7. As union is strength, I beseech you all, my brethren, to unite as closely as is practicable throughout the whole of your district. I am rejoiced to hear the Association is revived among you; let all your churches be united in it, and not only all your churches, but all the individuals and families which are so situated as not to be included in your churches. Strengthen the bonds of general brotherhood, be helpers of each other, and do all you can to promote the objects of your association.

8. Finally, I exhort you to exert yourselves to the utmost to promote the Unitarian cause. In its extension and prosperity, you will find the increase and prosperity of your several churches. Your zeal and Christian exertions for its promotion will secure your individual improvement, and render you the more active and useful in your particular congregations. You have a wide field around you for your labours; and remember, God hath enlightened and blessed you that you might enlighten and bless others. This you are to do by promoting the ministry of the word, by circulating suitable tracts, by your conversation, but above all by your truly Christian spirit and exemplary conduct; and that you may do this, is, my dear brethren, the fervent prayer of your servant in the Lord,

R. WRIGHT.

P. S. A letter on church discipline will conclude this series.

Rachael's Lament on the Birth of Benjamin.

[From Knox's "Harp of Zion."]—

"—and Rachael travailed, and she had hard labour. And it came to pass when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died,) that she called his name BEN-ONI (that is, the Son of my Sorrow): but his father called him BENJAMIN" (that is, the Son of my Right Hand).—Gen. xxiv. 16-18.

BEN-ONI! thou son of my sorrow,

I die by the pangs of thy birth!

And the sun shall arise on the morrow,

And find me no longer on earth;

And thou shalt be nursed by another,
And thou shalt be beauteous and brave,
When the head and the heart of thy mother
Repose in the gloom of the grave.

Yet sweet were the hopes that I cherish'd
As I thought—though unborn—upon thee,
When thou by my breast should'st be nourish'd,
When thou should'st be rock'd on my knee,
When thou with thy prattle should'st cheer me
As lisping a mother's sweet name,
When thou in thy strength should'st be near me,
When sadness and suffering came.

O thou, my young son ! thou canst know not
The anguish that throbs in my heart ;
And thy tear-drops of sorrow shall flow not
To see thy fond mother depart :
Yet when thine own brethren shall tell thee
Of her thou canst meet with no more,
Thou shalt weep o'er the loss that befell thee—
The affectionate mother that bore.

I leave thee, BEN-ONI ! I leave thee
For the silence and sleep of the dead ;
But though God of a mother bereave thee,
A father shall be in her stead.
I leave thee, but there is a promise
To dying mortality given,
That friends shall rejoin where a home is
Prepar'd for the righteous in heaven.

Richard Brothers, the False Prophet.

IN the last number (p. 380) we gave an extract from the Times newspaper on the end of this madman. A further account of him has been since published in the same paper, as the result of some pains-taking to investigate the matter, and this we think will not be uninteresting to our readers.

“MR. BROTHERS, it seems, was liberated from confinement by an order of Lord Briskine, as stated by a correspondent in *The Times* of October 6, in the year 1806. He then became an inmate of Mr. Finlayson, of Upper Baker

Street (although the appointed committee of his person was Mr. Fallofield, of Chancery Lane); and with that gentleman he resided until the period of his death, January 25, 1824. During this time he does not appear to have been under actual personal restraint; he visited friends, and was observed in the street, as stated by the writer already referred to. We have seen a letter written by Mr. Brothers in September, 1823, shortly before his death, which betrays no symptom of unsoundness of mind. He died intestate, leaving a widow and a married daughter. Administration was granted to the widow, Mrs. Elizabeth Brothers, by the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, in February, 1824. The actual property left by him was £450 3 per cent. consols, which, we understand, has not been paid by the Bank, owing to a claim on the part of Mr. Finlayson, who, by a Chancery order, has attached it, to answer the expenses incurred by him for the maintenance of Mr. Brothers, for which Lord Erskine promised (we are told) he should have an annual allowance of £300, but of which he has received not a farthing.

"As Mr. Brothers was a man of considerable notoriety at one period, and as the remoteness of that period may cause his eccentricities to be unknown or obscurely remembered at the present day, a brief sketch of his history may be acceptable.

"Richard Brothers was a native of Newfoundland, where several of his brothers and a sister still reside. He entered early in life into the British navy, where he attained the rank of lieutenant, and was said to be much respected. The first remarkable proof he gave of that religious frenzy which afterwards became so extravagant, was his refusing to make the requisite affidavit, on receiving his half-pay, which the Lords of the Admiralty consequently refused him. This instance of *persecution*, as he considered it, acted violently upon a mind apparently diseased by constant application to theological studies, and his conduct became so outrageous that he was removed, at the instance of his landlady, from his lodgings to the workhouse of the united parishes of St. Margaret and St. John the Evangelist, Westminster. By the interposition of the governors, he received from the Admiralty the arrears of his half-pay. Mr. Moser, the late magistrate, observed that his behaviour while in the workhouse was unexceptionable, and his con-

versation strongly marked with shrewdness and propriety on general subjects, but with enthusiastic flightiness when religion was touched upon. This was in the year 1792. He soon after quitted the workhouse, and in the year 1793 or 1794, he commenced business as an inspired prophet, and actually presented himself at the door of the House of Commons to advertise the members that the fulfilment of the 7th chapter of Daniel was at hand. He published several pamphlets, of which the most remarkable is entitled, *A Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Times; Book the First; wrote under the Direction of the Lord God, and published by his Sacred Command.* In this extraordinary work, he announced himself to be the nephew of God Almighty, and commissioned by him to predict the approaching destruction of London by earthquake and fire; likewise the destruction of the Parliament. Some persons were to be saved by his intercession, among whom was the Countess of Buckinghamshire, because she, (the writer observed,) as well as himself, was descended from 'Joseph, the president of Egypt.' At this period, Brothers became an object of astonishing curiosity: not only were all his books, and every book in which he was named, purchased and read with avidity; but it was stated in Parliament that his lodgings were, in the forenoon, constantly filled by persons of quality and fortune of both sexes, including members of the legislature, and that the street was crowded with their carriages. In one of his works, he presumed to address the King in the following words:—'The Lord God commands me to say to you, George III., King of England, that immediately on my being revealed in London to the Hebrews, as their prince, and to all nations as their governor, your crown must be delivered up to me, that all your power and authority may cease.' Government, during these feverish times, being apprehensive that Brothers, though a mere enthusiast himself, might become a dangerous tool in the hands of others, through the amazing influence he had gained over the public mind, (his house being daily beset by crowds of people,) determined upon taking him into custody. A warrant was accordingly issued by the Duke of Portland, one of the Secretaries of State, founded on the statute 15th Elizabeth, charging him with 'unlawfully, maliciously and wickedly writing, publishing and printing various fantastical prophecies, with

intent to cause dissensions and other disturbances within this realm, and other of the King's dominions.' By virtue of this warrant, which was executed with some difficulty, not from any opposition offered by Brothers, (who told the messengers he knew of their coming, and required only such force as should shew he accompanied them involuntarily,) but from the assembled multitude without, the prophet was brought from his apartments in Paddington Street, before the Privy Council, March 4, 1795, who referred his case to Drs. Simmonds and Munro: these physicians pronounced him insane; and, on the 27th, a commission *de lunatico inquirendo* was held, by which Brothers was found lunatic. He was subsequently (May 4th) removed from the custody of the King's messenger to Fisher's private madhouse, Lower Street, Islington, where the writer of this notice frequently saw him facing his sitting-room, walking backwards and forwards, as was his custom.

"A circumstance of a most singular kind giving additional interest to the affair of Mr. Brothers, we refer to the conduct of Mr. Nathaniel Brassey Halhed, member of Parliament for Lymington, a distinguished Orientalist, and reported to be a man of great general learning. This gentleman not only suffered himself to be inoculated with the disease of Mr. Brothers, but on the 31st of March, 1795, introduced the subject of his prophecies to the House of Commons, after formal notice, in a long and elaborate speech, which he concluded by moving, 'That the books of Richard Brothers, entitled *A Revealed Knowledge, &c.*, be laid upon the table of the house.' This motion, not being seconded, fell to the ground. Not discouraged, on 21st April, he renewed the subject by a motion for the warrant of commitment by which Mr. Brothers was placed in custody, and for a committee to inquire into the causes of his confinement. In the course of this speech, he declared that he would not flinch from the task imposed on him by the hand of Providence; and added, 'Many gentlemen (members), I am convinced, did read Mr. Brothers' books during the interval of the recess, and some I know to have applied for and received them from the author himself, previously to that period.' This motion, like the preceding, was not seconded.

"Balked in Parliament, Mr. Halhed resorted to the

press, and published several pamphlets on this subject, such as, *A Word of Admonition to the Right Hon. William Pitt, occasioned by the Prophecies of Brothers, &c.*; and *Two Letters to the Right Hon. Lord Loughborough, on the present Confinement of Richard Brothers, &c.* In the latter he observes, 'If violence is done to Mr. Brothers, and an earthquake should happen, how will you persuade mankind that it is a mere natural phenomenon?'

"But a most ingenious argument is employed by Mr. Halhed to obviate the objection made to Brothers' claiming the title of nephew to God Almighty. He says, 'I hope no man in this country will deny that Jesus Christ is God Almighty. Jesus Christ had brothers and sisters, and the son of one of them must necessarily have been his nephew. Extend the line of filiation as far as we please, through fifty, a hundred, or a thousand descents, the last is still a nephew (*nepos*) lineally descended from the first.'

"With respect to the real character of Mr. Brothers, the late Mr. Moser, from personal observation, describes him as 'not a dangerous, artful man, but if left to the dictates of his own heart, a man of honour, integrity and principle; possessed of a naturally strong, but unfortunately perverted, understanding; some knowledge of books, but a total ignorance of the world; gentle, mild and unassuming, though seemingly possessed of great sensibility; and although his mind was strongly bent towards a particular object, he could scarcely be said to be dogmatical even in the length of his enthusiasm.'

"Unfortunately for the reputation of Mr. Brothers, he fixed, like Joanna Southcote, near whom he rests, upon an event too near as a criterion of his veracity. He declared that the Millenium was to commence on the 19th of November, 1795, 'at or about sun-rise, in the latitude of Jerusalem.'

"He was not indifferent to worldly profit; he assigned, in one of his pamphlets, as a motive for writing, a desire to provide for his wife and children. His publications were probably very lucrative to him. He was between 70 and 80. at the time of his death.

"Mr. Sharpe, the celebrated engraver, was a disciple of Brothers, as he was afterwards of Joanna Southcote. His engraving of Brothers is in his most forcible manner."

*Mr. Wellbeloved's Sermon, "The Mystery of Godliness,"
on 1 Tim. iii. 16.**

THE "mystery of godliness" and "God manifest in the flesh" have been for ages favourite topics of declamation with Trinitarians. It has, however, been shewn again and again by sober argument, that the phrases imply nothing that is inconsistent with the proper Unitarian doctrine, and particularly in a sermon of Dr. Lardner's upon the text, which is worthy of the attention of all who would understand its true doctrine.†

This Sermon of Mr. Wellbeloved's is also a valuable addition to our store of rational scripture criticism. In his argument, designed to establish the true meaning of the passage, he discusses several important points of theology, and to those that know him as a writer we need not say he discusses them well. He has some just remarks (pp. 3—11) on the term *mystery*, which the multitude and even their leaders are so unwilling to understand.

"A *mystery*," says Mr. Wellbeloved, "in the writings of the New Testament, and to these we may confine our attention at present, signifies a *secret*, a hidden thing, a thing undiscovered and unrevealed. Not what is inconceivable, inexplicable, or incapable of being fully known, but only something actually unknown. The plainest fact, the clearest, the most intelligible, the most easily comprehensible thought or purpose, either of God or man, till it is known, is a secret, a mystery hidden from ages and generations. Further, as the term *mystery* does not signify what is incapable of being known or understood, so neither does it *always* signify a thing that is actually or universally, but what has been at some time, or is, in some respect, unknown. When, again, this term *mystery*, is used in connexion with others which denote information or discovery, it then signifies, not what confounds the reason and is above the comprehension of mankind, but what was once a secret, what ~~was~~ *once* a mystery, but is so no longer. A secret told is a mystery revealed."—Pp. 6; 7.

* The Mystery of Godliness. A Sermon preached at Halifax, on Wednesday, May 11, 1825, before the Members of the West-Riding Tract Society; and again at Evesham, on Wednesday, July 12, 1826, before the Members of the Unitarian Tract Society for Warwickshire. By Charles Wellbeloved. York: printed by Wilson and Sons; sold by Longman and Co., and by Hunter, London. 8mo. pp. 36.

† Lardner's Sermons, Vol. H. S. xv., or Works, Vol. X. pp. 402—491.

In reply to the questions, "What can be called mysterious and incomprehensible, if the declaration that God was manifest in the flesh be not so? What else than a mystery, and a great mystery is it, that an infinite nature should be united to a finite nature; God united with a man in such a manner as to become strictly and properly one nature? What is incomprehensible, if this be not, that an omnipresent and eternal Spirit should become flesh, and die on a cross, and though independent and supreme, be exalted and glorified?"—the preacher says,

"Such a doctrine must certainly be acknowledged to be a mystery, in the sense commonly affixed to that term; but no such mystery is to be found among the doctrines taught by the apostles; no such mystery is expressed in the passage now before us.

"Granting, for a moment, (and I am the more willing to grant it, as it will give me an opportunity of illustrating the language of Scripture,) that the clause in the text, which is generally supposed to be the enunciation of the mystery which Paul calls the mystery of godliness, has come down to us precisely as the apostle originally wrote it,—no such doctrine as the incarnation of one person of a triune Godhead is conveyed by it. The phrase 'God was manifested in the flesh,' supposing it to be scriptural, would not necessarily imply any more than that the power of God was, in some remarkable manner, displayed in one of the human race. To a reader of the New Testament, duly attentive to the terms in which Jesus, as the inspired Messenger of heaven, and even the apostles whom he commissioned to preach his gospel to all nations, after his death, are spoken of, it conveys no other notion than this, that the doctrine which he delivered had been derived immediately from God, and that the works to which he appealed as an evidence of this, were wrought by the Creator and Governor of the world.—When the timid ruler of the Jews, deeply impressed by the miracles of Jesus, came to him by night, to scrutinize his character, and to gain some better knowledge of his views, he thus addressed him: 'Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles which thou doest, except God be with him.' To Nicodemus, we may be sure, the language attributed to Paul would not have suggested any mysterious notion. When, happily for the poor distressed widow of Nain, Jesus met her near the gate of her city, following her dead son to the grave, and, having by his word restored him to life, delivered him to his mother, we are told that they who saw what was done, glorified God, saying, 'A great prophet is risen up amongst us, and God hath visited his people.' These, without doubt, would readily comprehend how God could be manifested in the flesh.—Such language would have conveyed no notion of

a mystery to Cornelius the Roman centurion, or to those who, with him, were converted to the Christian faith by the preaching of the apostle Peter; who declared to them 'how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by the devil; for God was with him.'—Pp. 12, 13.

Mr. Wellbeloved thinks that this interpretation still leaves the passage encumbered with difficulties,—and difficulties not merely in relation to Unitarianism. He asks, "How could God be justified, or how could God be received up into glory?" We do not feel the difficulty so strongly as the preacher—we are glad, however, that his sense of it has led him to explain the history of the text, and to vindicate the true reading, in the following very interesting passage:

"Among the difficulties which attend the interpretation of the Scriptures, there is one, which the learned of all sects and parties acknowledge to exist, arising out of the errors to which the Scriptures, in their original languages, were long and unavoidably exposed, by their being often transcribed, in many instances, by careless or ignorant copyists; and by other circumstances necessarily incidental to the multiplication of copies, prior to the invention of printing. An error of this kind has, I believe, crept into the passage before us; the correction of which will remove every obscurity, and render the language of the apostle throughout intelligible, and consistent both with itself and with every other part of the New Testament. But, before I state what this error is, and shew you how it ought to be amended, it will not be improper, and it may be useful, to inform those of my audience who may not be conversant with these subjects, as plainly as I am able, of the means we have of detecting such corruptions of the original text.

"The invention of the art of printing, it is universally known, is of comparatively a modern date. Before that art was discovered, copies of the works of authors were multiplied by means of writing. These copies are called *manuscripts*. And, as the books of the New Testament were sought after, not only by Christian churches wherever established, but by such individual Christians, also, as could afford to purchase them, a great number of copies were taken by persons whose chief occupation it was to transcribe these books. Several hundreds of these manuscripts, containing either the whole or parts of the New Testament, and written between the fourth and fifteenth centuries of the Christian era, have been carefully examined by various learned men, and all the variations, however minute, between them and the printed Greek Testaments in common use, have been accurately noted and faithfully published. We have, besides, several very *ancient translations* of the Christian Scrip-

tures into various languages, which were made from manuscript copies of the original Scriptures, older than any which have come down to our times. And by a diligent perusal of these, learned men can easily discover what the original words in any given passage were in the copy which the translators used. We have, further, *the writings of many Christians* who lived in successive ages, in different parts of the world, from very nearly the times of the apostles, and which contain such frequent and extended quotations from manuscripts or versions of the New Testament, in their possession, that if the books of the New Testament were lost, we could, by the assistance of these writings, almost entirely replace them. By the united aid of these manuscripts, versions and writings of ancient Christian fathers, it is possible to discover and to correct every error of importance which may, by any means, have crept into the original text of the sacred Scriptures.

“ Now, by such aid we learn, that the term rendered *God*, in the passage we are now considering, has been improperly substituted for another term by some ancient transcriber, and copied from him by others; and, consequently, that the phrase, *God was manifest in flesh*, although capable, when considered by itself, as you have seen, of being rationally and scripturally explained, made no part of the apostle's declaration. The passage does not appear in this form in the most ancient and valuable manuscripts. It could not have been seen in this form by the authors of the earliest and the best versions of the New Testament. In the writings of the greater part of the Christian fathers, also, where the passage is evidently cited, it is not thus cited: not even (which is a fact of the highest importance) where it would have been thought decisive, in respect of some of the points which were subjects of controversy in the earlier ages of the church. There is, on the whole, abundant reason to believe that this clause in the text, as written by the apostle, was no other than this: ‘He who was manifested (or appeared) in flesh:’ so that the whole verse will run thus; ‘And confessedly great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifested in flesh, was justified by the Spirit, seen by angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.’ Such a change would appear great and violent, and would, indeed, be so, in our own, or in any other language, or in any version; but the case is very different with respect to the original. A trifling accident, or a slight touch of the pen, might convert the word which is translated by the English term *He*, into that which is uniformly translated *God*.

“ I hope I shall not be thought to descend into particulars too minute, or in any manner improper, for this time or place, if I endeavour to satisfy the minds of my unlearned readers, by explaining to them how this important difference between the text as it now stands, and as I have just asserted it ought to stand,

might arise. Figure, then, to yourselves, a small word composed of two letters, exactly similar to the capital letters O and C of the English alphabet. You will then have the exact representation of a Greek word as it is found in ancient Greek manuscripts, which, translated into English, would be *who*, or *He who*. Suppose, now, that by accident or design, any transcriber should place a dot or a very small horizontal line in the middle of the O; this would be a very slight change in the form of the word, and might easily take place, but it would make a momentous change in the meaning of the passage. For we have thus the two letters which, in almost all ancient Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, exhibit the contracted form of the word which signifies God. To render this form perfect, a very small line above the letters is necessary; and as it easily might, so it certainly would be added, when the letter O had undergone the change supposed, either through design or accident.* Such is the change which I suppose to have taken place in this passage, four or five hundred years after the days of the apostles; and hence has been derived the declaration, falsely attributed to the apostle, that 'God was manifest in flesh.'—Pp. 19—24.

It may not be known to all our readers that the great Sir Isaac Newton wrote a letter to M. Le Clerc, afterwards published, to prove that the common reading of the text is corrupt, and that the true reading is *which* (i. e. which mystery) *was manifest*, &c.

In his sermon before referred to, Dr. Lardner seems to be balanced between the received reading *God*, and that defended by Sir Isaac Newton, *which*; but he shews that "which soever of these two readings we follow, the meaning is much the same." "Suppose the subject here spoken of be *the mystery of godliness*: it is known and believed by all Christians, that the doctrine of the gospel was *manifested* to, and among men, by Jesus Christ and his apostles: yet it was *justified by the Spirit*, confirmed by miracles wrought by Christ himself, and by his apostles, and others afterwards: *seen of angels*, beheld by them with ready approbation, and with surprise and wonder: *preached to the Gentiles*, as well as Jews: *believed on in the world*, received by men of all characters in all nations: *received up into glory*, gloriously exalted, greatly honoured and magnified by that reception, and by its effects in the hearts and lives of men.—Suppose this to be said of God:

* The progress of the corruption would be this: OC, *who*, or *He who*; OC OC, *God*.

it is also true and received by all Christians in general. There was an especial presence, and most extraordinary manifestation of the Divine Being in the human nature, or person of Jesus Christ, who is therefore called 'Emmanuel,' or 'God with us.' The divine authority of Jesus was *justified by the Spirit*, by many miraculous works, and by a very plentiful effusion of the Holy Ghost upon such as believed in him. He was seen and ministered to *by angels*, *preached unto the Gentiles*, *believed on in the world*, and finally, *received up into glory in heaven.*"*

Mr. Wellbeloved interprets the manifestation *in the flesh*, of Christ's appearing in a humble condition and a suffering and mortal nature; and he considers the being *seen of angels* to refer to our Lord's being so often seen of the angels of the churches, the messengers of his word, the apostles, after his resurrection, whose personal acquaintance with him was necessary to make their testimony to his being raised from the dead complete.

Religious Observance of Christmas Day.

SIR,

November 17, 1826.

I AM a Protestant Dissenter, but not an advocate for universal and indiscriminate nonconformity. My opinions are far wide of the Thirty-nine Articles; yet I can see some good thing in the Church of England, and where I see good I wish to follow it. On one point of this description I wish to say a few words to your readers.

The religious observance of Christmas Day was strongly objected to by the old Nonconformists, as it is by the Presbyterians of Scotland to this day. That observance was in their time compulsory, and therefore resistance was necessary to maintain the rights of conscience. Superstition too was largely mixed up with the celebration, and to protest against the superstition it might have been expedient to drop the celebration altogether: the very name *Christmas*, or *Christ's mass*, shews the origin of the festival.

But now that force is no longer applied to conscience, and that much at least of the superstition connected with the observance has been done away, it is worth while to inquire whether the Dissenters, and particularly the Unitarian Dissenters, may not innocently, safely and profitably

join with their fellow-christians in celebrating the birth of Christ on the 25th of December.

I grant that it cannot be proved that Jesus was born on that precise day, and that some strong objections may be made to it as the true time of the Nativity. But this is of little moment. Speaking chronologically, the keeping of the exact time of an event is an impossibility with regard to all people and to distant ages. That, however, is to all practical purposes an anniversary which all persons whom it interests agree to consider as such. If the New Year opens on a Sunday, persons are accustomed to celebrate the opening the next day, many hours after it has really opened. To make the observance of times morally useful, all that is needed is, that they shall come before us naturally associated with particular ideas. Christmas Day has undoubtedly the benefit of this association; for there is no Dissenter, however rigid, who can keep his thoughts on that day from recurring to the event which throughout Christendom it commemorates.

Why should he wish to keep his thoughts from the interesting, delightful subject? The birth of Christ was an unspeakable blessing to mankind. It cannot be too often or deeply contemplated; and if it be a proper meditation for every day, it cannot surely be out of place on that day when the mass of Christians agree to make it the theme of discourse and the occasion of pious rejoicing.

The day has been and is abused. What day is not? Do we not all complain of the abuse of the Lord's Day, both by the superstitious and the profane?

When honest John Bunyan lay in Bedford jail for conscience' sake, the Mayor (I think it was) of that town, by way of taunting the Nonconformist's known prejudices with regard to Christmas, sent him a Christmas pye, expecting of course that it would not be received. The humorous prisoner, however, accepted the present and sent this message by the bearer: "Thank thy master for me, and tell him that John Bunyan can distinguish between Christmas and pye, and like the one though he dislike the other."

He is not very wise who cannot separate the superstition from the agreeable and rational and moral and religious use of Christmas tide.

A divine service on the day is the best of all opportunities of exposing and protesting against whatever errors have grown in the course of time around the subject of the

birth of Christ. It also allows many persons who are tied to their own places of worship on the Sunday, to step in and hear what are the principles of Dissenters and Unitarians.

I confess when I have heard the bells on a Christmas morning with their cheerful sounds summoning Christians to attend the altar with their thanksgivings to the God and Father of Christ, and have seen the doors of Dissenting Meeting-houses fast closed, I have felt that there is something unsocial and sullen in our opinions and customs. What do the vulgar conclude when they observe Unitarian Chapels shut on this anniversary,—but that their usual worshippers own little or no interest in the event which the rest of the world are celebrating with so much gladness? The conclusion is erroneous; but why should we countenance it by our conduct?

As a religious question, the observation of Christmas and of other church festivals is referred by the apostle Paul to every one's sense of right. *He that regardeth the day, to the Lord he regardeth it: he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it.* Let all have full liberty. But in a matter left indifferent by the founders of our faith, I for one prefer uniting with my fellow-christians to differing from them; especially as my faith may be confirmed and my devotional feelings quickened by a conformity, within the bounds of conscience, to a custom nearly universal and of unquestioned antiquity.

Seeing no probable evil but much certain good in a Christmas service amongst Dissenters, and particularly Unitarian Dissenters, I cannot help hoping that you, Sir, *Christian Reformer* as you are and I am persuaded ever will be, will permit me to lay these thoughts before your readers and to invite their candid attention to my recommendation.

AN UNITARIAN MINISTER.

INTELLIGENCE.

Commencement of Unitarian Worship at Hulme.

A place of Unitarian Worship was opened for Sunday Evening worship on Sunday evening, October 1st, at *Hulme*, near Manchester, when a Sermon was preached by the Rev. J. G. Robberds, of Manchester, from the words of our Saviour, "I and my Father are one." Unitarianism had never before been preached in this populous township. The preaching is to be

conducted by the ministers of Manchester and the neighbourhood. A Calvinist minister in the vicinity has taken the alarm and commenced a course of Lectures against Unitarianism. The preachers at Hulme will also take up a series of doctrinal subjects. We learn that the Committee for managing this service are in want of doctrinal tracts for distribution and for the founding of a Library, and would thankfully receive any that individuals or societies have at their disposal, through the hands of the Rev. J. R. Beard, Greengate, Salford, near Manchester.

Bolton District Association.

AN Unitarian Association has been formed under the above denomination, comprehending congregations within a circle of about ten miles round Bolton. The first half-yearly meeting was held in the Bank-Street Chapel, Bolton, on the 28th of September. The Rev. James Whitehead, of Cockey Moor, conducted the devotional service, and the Rev. B. R. Davis, of Chowbent, preached from Acts xxviii. 15. Two villages in the district are selected for missionary lectures on the Sunday evening. The next meeting of the Association is to be held at Bury, the Rev. W. Tate, of Chorley, to preach.

Opening of the New Parliament.

THE New Parliament, which was convened some days previous for the sake of swearing in the members of the House of Commons, was opened for business by the KING in person, on Tuesday, the 21st instant. Complaints were made by the Opposition in both Houses of the deficiencies of the Speech from the Throne. The address was moved in the Lords by the Earl CORNWALLIS and seconded by Lord COLVILLE; in the Commons it was moved by the Honourable Mr. LIDDELL, member for Northumberland, and seconded by the Honourable G. WIN, member for Maldon.

There was nothing in the debate which belongs to the *Christian Reformer*, excepting what was said relating to the religious grievances of Ireland. On this topic, Mr. BROUGHAM said it struck him as a most extraordinary circumstance, that at a time when in the minds of all men there was but one prevailing opinion as to the aspect of public affairs, and that next to what relates to the good of the people, and in some minds even before the good of the people, an urgent demand was felt by every one that the affairs of Ireland should be earnestly and speedily, though maturely considered, yet that, in the King's Speech, *the name of Ireland should never once be mentioned*. He hoped there was nothing ominous in it, but it must be confessed that it was in the last degree surprising. It was a singular fact that just before the breaking out of the American war, at a time

when all men's eyes were pointed towards America, and when America was the word which hung upon the quivering lip of every man who thought or felt at all, neither mention nor allusion was made to it in the speech from the throne. In a time of scarcely less anxiety, Ireland was omitted in the speech which had just been read to the house. So far was that omission from being expected in America, that (as he had been just reminded) it was treated as a bitter calumny and satire, both upon the mother country and the colonies, and the printer who first published a copy of the King's Speech was thrown into prison. No man living could believe, knowing what had been doing in Ireland for the last six months, what was doing there now, and *what ought to be done here*, that the King's Speech contained no mention whatever of the condition of that country. He protested against the omission. The most satisfactory proposition that his Majesty's Government could make would be some measure of sound and enlightened policy which should do justice to Ireland, and save that country from the *combined horrors of civil and RELIGIOUS WARFARE.*

Mr. DAWSON, the new member for the county of Louth, deplored, as an Irish member, the omission in the speech from the throne of mention of the present state of Ireland. He had just seen accounts in the Irish newspapers of the different parties being anxious to come to *open war*. He contended that the discontents of Ireland ought to undergo investigation. By conciliating that country the charge and disgrace of a standing army of 15,000 troops might be got rid of. The honourable member then directed the attention of the House to foreign countries, the condition of which should prompt Parliament to make immediate inquiry into the *religious grievances* of Ireland. How had other nations disposed of their religious disputes? There had been quarreling on religious grounds in the Netherlands, though it had never proceeded to the length of murder, firing and assassination, as in Ireland; but the quarrels had been appeased by every man being recently placed upon an equality as to political rights. The speaker then referred to the religious liberty enjoyed in America, which had proved so beneficial, and which he could not but think was applicable to every country under Heaven. At the present moment, he said, there were no religious disputes in France, because there was no distinction in the admission of persons to civil offices founded on a difference of creeds. France had done more for religious toleration; she had provided for the maintenance of the Protestant Clergy: what became then of the argument from Catholic illiberality? It had been said (in the speech of the Seconder), that further concessions to the Irish Catholics would destroy the establishment in Church and State. If the Church were founded upon the rock of truth, how could it be injured? But the temporalities of the Church might be injured! The Catholics did not

ask for any share of those temporalities, which were in the hands of the clergy, who were likely enough to hold them fast; all they asked for was to be put upon an equality in civil rights with their Protestant brethren. How this could harm the temporalities of the Church, no one could see but the clergy, *who somehow or other had been distinguished in all ages by a peculiar sensitiveness to every thing which seemed to affect their interests.* He trusted that before the end of the present session it would be proved, that the privileges asked by the Catholics could be granted to them without any danger to Church or State, or to the temporalities of either, — *and not only to the Catholics, but to ALL CLASSES OF DISSENTERS.* [Loud cries of “Hear,” and Cheers.]

Mr. FERGUSSON, member for Kirkcudbright, gave his opinion on one of those subjects on which the honourable member (Mr. Dawson) had made so forcible and touching an appeal to the house; and that opinion was, that *no civil disability should be attached to spiritual belief.*

OBITUARY.

1826. Aug. 16, aged 70, Mr. WILLIAM BIDLAKE, of *Homer-ton*, respected and esteemed by all that knew him. He was of the medical profession, and had in early life considerable practice in the Eastern district of London. He retired from business thirty years ago upon what his habits and principles led him to esteem a competency, and chose his residence in the parish of Hackney, for the sake of Unitarian worship, on which he punctually attended, in the Gravel-Pit Meeting, during that period. His character was an ornament to his religious profession.

— 19, at *Portsea*, aged 60, Mr. JOHN BRENT, a member of the Unitarian Baptist Church at Portsmouth, and for some years a preacher in that Connexion. He printed, in 1814, a Discourse in vindication of the General Baptists from some aspersions cast upon them by Mr. Ivimey; and more latterly he published a Lecture preached in reference to some reflections cast upon the Church to which he belonged at a Missionary Meeting. He was a decided Unitarian, a zealous Baptist and a warm friend of universal liberty, civil and religious. “For him,” says a correspondent, “Death had no terrors: he did not indeed boast of raptures, but expressed a grateful sense of the kind attentions of his friends, spoke of his approaching dissolution, gave his dying admonition, and took his last farewell with calmness.”

November 7, Rev. JOHN CUNDILL met his death in a most awful manner. He was passenger on board the Graham Steam Boat from Grimsby to Hull, and the Graham having been laid along-side the United Kingdom Scottish Steam Vessel from London to Edinburgh, to take in the passengers for Hull, the boiler of the Graham burst with a dreadful explosion, by which several persons (some accounts say 8) were killed, amongst whom was the above-named person. Two or three of the unhappy persons destroyed were at once shattered to atoms; but Mr. Cundill, with others, was blown overboard. On the coroner's inquest, "George Wright, the steward, deposed, that Mr. Cundill was one of the passengers of the Graham. Witness heard him preach on Sunday night, and was speaking to him a few minutes before the accident." "Mr. Richard Garton was a passenger on board the Graham. Saw Mr. Cundill taken out of the water into a boat immediately after the explosion. He was not dead, but died a few minutes after he was taken on board the United Kingdom. He (Cundill) was a long time in the water. He appeared to have died from suffocation. He was swimming, nearly exhausted, when the boat took him up."—In this manner perished John Cundill, who was well known to some of our readers. He was a native of Lincolnshire, was brought up as a gardener, but being of an inquiring mind and fond of knowledge, took to books and became a General Baptist Minister. In this character he was successively at Soham, Cambridgeshire; Cranbrook, Kent; Saffron Walden, Essex; and latterly at Hull. Disappointments and straightened circumstances had soured his temper, and the few last years of his life were far from happy. He published a pamphlet on his dismissal from Walden, exposing his fancied wrongs. We believe that he always meant to do right, but that a too warm constitutional temperament sometimes obscured his judgment. Let his frailties be now buried in his untimely grave.—It is a singular fact that the last time that Mr. Cundill was in London, he narrowly escaped being burnt to death in his bed: one person perished in that manner in the house in which he at that time was lodging.—He has left a widow and several children wholly unprovided for.—The signature J. C., p. 70 of this volume and in the preceding volumes of this work, stands for *John Cundill*. The letters on "The Unchangeable Love of God," of which the 1st will be found on the above reference, were not continued, though several were in our hands, because we understood the writer professed to have undergone some change of opinions, and knew not how far the letters sent to us many months ago were agreeable to his latest faith.

— 10, the Rev. JOHN YATES, of *Liverpool*, who had been from 1777 to 1823, the respected minister of the large and wealthy congregation of Paradise Street, in that town. He

was, we believe, a native of Bolton. He received his education at the academy at Warrington, from which so many able Unitarian ministers proceeded. He was blessed with great substance and had a heart to use it liberally, being a subscriber to all Unitarian institutions and a benefactor in various ways to his own town and neighbourhood. On his retirement from his pastoral charge, occasioned by his years, the congregation presented him with a piece of plate of the value of One Hundred Guineas, as an expression of gratitude for his public services, and a testimony to his private virtues.

SELECT LIST OF NEW BOOKS.

The Mystery of Godliness. A Sermon preached at Halifax and Evesham. By C. Wellbeloved. 8vo.

The Character of Jesus Christ an Evidence of his Divine Mission. A Sermon. By Robert Aspland. 2nd edition. 12mo. 1s.

An Attempt to ascertain the Import of the Title "Son of Man," commonly assumed by our Lord. A Sermon. By Robert Aspland. 2nd edition. 12mo. 1s.

Genuine Christianity, or the Unitarian Doctrine Briefly Stated. By A Physician. 12mo. 1s.

Letters on the Church. By an Episcopalian. 8vo. 7s.

Sacred Specimens, selected from the Early English Poets, with Prefatory Verses. By the Rev. John Mitford. 8vo. 8s. 6d.

A Plain Statement of the Evidences of Christianity, divided into Short Chapters, with Questions annexed to each; designed for the Use of Schools, Sunday Schools, and Young Persons. By Francis Knowles. No. I. 2d.

The Trinity no Scripture Doctrine. A Letter to a Clergyman. By B. Mardon, M. A. 12mo. 6d.

A Vindication of the Conduct of the Middleton (Lancashire) Unitarians. By J. R. Beard. 12mo. 6d.

CORRESPONDENCE.

COMMUNICATIONS have been received from B. Also, the papers "On the Duty of Prayer," "Hints to Congregational Musicians," and "Description of a Village Churchyard."

Guillaume's "Collection of Texts" is designed for insertion in the next volume. We shall be glad to receive from him the other proposed "Collection."

We are pleased with G. B.'s design and hope to be able to make use of his papers in the next volume; but we trust that in compiling them he will remember his own admission of the necessity of brevity. Correct references to the volume and page of *The Christian Reformer* which are in view, are very desirable.

Although several Numbers of *THE CHRISTIAN REFORMER* have been reprinted, many are very scarce, and some are nearly out of print: Subscribers are therefore advised to make early application for *back Numbers and Volumes* to complete their sets.

THE
Christian Reformer.

No. CXLIV.] DECEMBER, 1826.

[Vol. XII.]

*Genuine Christianity, or the Unitarian Doctrine Briefly
Stated, by a Physician.*

THIS is the title of a pamphlet, the second edition of which is just published.*

A remarkable circumstance in the history of English Unitarianism is the number of *laymen* who have stood publicly forward as its advocates. *Milton* may now be appealed to as one of the ablest opponents, on scriptural grounds, of the doctrine of the Trinity. *Sir Isaac Newton's* "Letters to Le Clerc" on two of the disputed texts in the controversy, rendered great service to the Unitarian cause: his unpublished writings in the keeping of the Portsmouth family, will probably, if they ever see the light, be of still greater service. *Locke* in his Commentary on Paul's Epistles and his "Reasonableness of Christianity" has taken Unitarian ground, and he is thought to have been the author of some of the old Unitarian Tracts. And, as the "Physician" before us observes, (p. 4, note,) "Milton, Newton and Locke is indeed a triad for whose sentiments no Englishman need blush."

After these immortal laymen, whose names are their country's glory, came *Hopton Haynes*, the Master of the Mint, whose work on the "Attributes," designed to establish by a critical examination of the Scriptures the sole Deity of the Father, is still accounted one of the best books in its department of the controversy that the Unitarians possess.

Here let us not overlook the simple-hearted, intrepid *Edward Elwall*, whose Trial on the charge of Unitarianism, or as it was called in his day *Blasphemy*, is a popular tract, and who has left several pamphlets asserting and defending *extreme* Unitarianism, which manifest great integrity of purpose, much sagacity and fearless courage.

Mr. *Amory*, the author of the singular romance entitled "John Bunce," is another Unitarian advocate, who has

* Printed at Falmouth and sold by James Philp: sold also at London, by R. Hunter. 12mo. 1s.

made many familiar with the doctrine who would not have learned it from graver writers.

In the same list is to be placed Mr. *Michael Dodson*, the celebrated lawyer, whose "Notes on Isaiah" are a valuable addition to an Unitarian library.

The "Welsh Freeholder," the late Mr. *David Jones*, the Chancery Barrister, contributed many valuable publications to the Unitarian cause.

It is less known that the late Duke of *Grafton* wrote one pamphlet at least of an Unitarian complexion, and he left behind him for the use of his family a printed, but not published, exposition of his faith.

Many laymen of the present day have been in one period of their lives Unitarian writers, such as Sir *Benjamin Hobhouse*; the truly respectable gentleman who writes under the denomination of "Another Barrister;" the learned and eloquent author of the "Appeal to Scripture and Tradition" on behalf of the Unitarian Faith; Mr. *Cooper*, formerly of Manchester, now of America, one of whose well-argued Essays was inserted in the *Christian Reformer*, Vol. V. pp. 82, 104, 172; Mr. *Thomas Roster*, who has suffered disownment by the Quakers for re-asserting the doctrines of William Penn; Captain *Gifford*, of the army; Mr. (late Captain) *Thrush*, of the Royal Navy; and now, not to mention many others, the "Physician," the title of whose publication stands at the head of this article.*

This writer in a brief but satisfactory manner discusses the whole Unitarian question, and for perspicuity, correctness, good temper, scriptural knowledge and suitableness to the times and the present state of the controversy, we know of few cheap publications better fitted for the hands of young persons and inquirers.

The "Physician" is frank and decided, while he is courteous. He says truly, p. 10, "The Unitarian asserts without fear of contradiction, that there is not a single plain scripture authority, be it precept or example, to justify our addressing real religious worship to any other name but that of God the Father only. And such is the practice of the Unitarian chapel, harmonizing therein with the Scrip-

* Unitarianism has not been without its female advocates, amongst whom stand pre-eminent the late Mrs. Barbauld and the late Mrs. Cappe, of whose names any denomination might boast. The time will come when other writers of the same sex may be put on record as the defenders by their pens of pure Christianity.

tures, and with the recorded customs of the first Christians. Here alone, amidst so many temples professedly Christian, the Father of Jesus Christ is honoured as the only true God."

On the "orthodox" quibble of two natures in Christ, by which the sense of the plainest scriptures is evaded, the "Physician" says, with great spirit,

"In reply to this curious distinction, it would be quite sufficient to observe that it is quite *gratuitous*: Christ *never* explained his own words in this way, and who shall presume so to explain them for him? But the truth is, that his words will not bear such an interpretation without the greatest violence. There is nothing in the language of Christ's assertions to suggest to us that they are true only in a certain qualified and peculiar sense; they are made absolutely, and if they are not true absolutely, I know not what can be said of them but that they are absolutely false. To perceive the force of this, let us suppose it asserted that Christ never died, never was crucified, never was buried, never rose again. Who would not allow that such assertions would be false, and unfit to be uttered? Yet they might be justified by the same sort of saving clause which is so easily admitted in defence of orthodoxy. These things, it might be said, are spoken of Christ in reference to his Divine nature only; and certainly, *with that limitation*, they might be spoken truly enough. But if such limitation were not expressed, then those assertions would be false; not more false, however, than would be that other unqualified assertion which Jesus really made, '*Of that day and hour knoweth not the Son,*' if at that same time, possessing the omniscience of Deity, he knew them perfectly well. Declarations made with such mental reservations are no more than equivocation and deceit."—Pp. 11, 12.

There is no point on which the Calvinists are more assured of a triumph over the Unitarians, than the death of Christ; and yet the death of Christ is an utter impossibility on the supposition of his essential deity. Hear this able reasoner:

"As it is allowed that God cannot suffer, to say that Christ was God and yet did suffer, is another contradiction; a thing not at all above reason, but plainly contrary to it. For what avails that trite reply, that he did not suffer as God? If God suffered at all, whether in the assumed nature of man or any other form, still he suffered, and the assertion that he cannot suffer is falsified. But let me ask what suffering the scene of crucifixion could inflict on a mind whose presence, if he then possessed the Divine perfections, was throughout the universe, diffusing bliss and receiving adoration? If a petty insect inflicts its minute

wound on a remote portion of our body, while all our nobler faculties are occupied with some active and animating pursuit, how little do we feel it! Such and infinitely less would be the sufferings of humanity to a being enjoying at the same moment the unutterable glory of God. But this is not all—*Jesus died*. Then if Jesus was God, it is an inevitable inference, that God died. But here I will stop, because these things, although they may be called orthodox, are not fit to be spoken, and verge on blasphemy. I submit it to every pious and enlightened Christian, that the *Living God*, the immortal King of Ages, cannot take it on himself to die in any form or nature whatever. But if he could, what would death have been to one who all the while never ceased to live in transcendent glory? Something less than it is to us, when a single hair dies on our heads, and drops unnoticed to the ground.”—Pp. 26, 27.

The following view of the evidence for Unitarianism has always appeared to us extremely important :

“Though studious of brevity, there is one consideration adduced by Unitarians, which appears to me so powerful that I cannot omit it. It is that of the *negative evidence* which the scripture affords in their favour. Let it only be considered that *in the three first gospels, and Acts of the Apostles, there is not a single passage in which the deity or pre-existence of Christ can with any appearance of reason be even pretended to be mentioned*: nothing occurs from which we should be led to view him in any other light than that in which Peter represented him on the day of Pentecost, ‘*a man approved of God by signs and wonders which God did by him in the midst of us.*’ Now I ask, is it possible that three of his best-informed followers should have left formal memorials of his life and doctrine, and one of them an account of the preaching of his apostles after his death, without taking any notice of so astonishing and essential a fact, as that he had declared himself to be not only a man, as he appeared to be, but in very deed the Almighty God, the creator of the universe, descended from heaven and dwelling personally among mankind, had such been really the case? I say, if these Christian memorialists, undertaking as they do to give us sufficient accounts of their master’s life and discourses, have indeed left us narratives so miserably defective as this would imply, farewell to the credibility of the gospel history; such writings, in the judgment of all impartial critics, will be esteemed destitute of good faith, and unworthy of credit. But the negative evidence for Unitarianism is not confined to these books alone: it may be boldly said, that *there is not a single explicit and unequivocal declaration either of the deity or pre-existence of Christ in the whole of the New Testament*. The passages which are brought to prove these doctrines are either corrupt readings, or mistranslations, or ambiguous sentences

which will admit of another interpretation. If this new, grand, and most astonishing doctrine had really been a part of the gospel, the apostles would most assuredly have enforced it in statements as plain and explicit as language could supply, and insisted on it with that pointedness and frequency which its novelty, importance, and apparent difficulty would have demanded. That they have not done so, is the best possible proof that they were entirely unacquainted with it, and that those who now endeavour to discover it in some obscure expressions which their writings occasionally present, are labouring under a great error, and seeking what they will never truly find."—Pp. 43—45.

Pious men have been strongly affected by what they have regarded as a presumptive argument against the Unitarian faith from the nearly universal prevalence for ages of the contrary doctrine;—this is well met by our author.

"I have known some to whom it has seemed impossible to believe, that God would suffer an error of so great magnitude as Unitarians represent the doctrine of the Trinity to be, to overrun the church so long and so extensively, and especially to obscure the faith of so many pious minds. It becomes us not to imagine what God would or would not do, but to remember what he has done. For how many centuries was not the whole church overrun with all the errors of Popery? The Reformation even to this day has had but a partial diffusion, and by far the larger part of Christendom is still involved in all the corruptions of the Greek and Roman churches. Yet candour must admit, what is an undoubted fact, that multitudes of persons as pious and devoted as any Protestants, have lived and died in those communions, and even been zealously tenacious of their errors. Among Protestants themselves, how many men of deep piety and fervent prayer, have eagerly contended for the most opposite opinions! It is clear then, that the order of Providence has not in fact preserved either the church at large or its most pious members from gross prevailing delusions, in numberless instances; and there is therefore no reason to suppose that it must have done so in the instance in question. Is not a great and general apostacy of the church the burthen of New-Testament prophecy? Shall we then, when the existence of this apostacy is pointed out, turn round and say, that it is impossible that God can have suffered such a thing to happen? As regards pious individuals, if their piety have been sincere, their salvation has been secured, whatever may have been the errors of their creed. If this be admitted, it is sufficient to justify the ways of God, and quiet all our anxieties."—Pp. 45, 46.

We can only quote one more passage, but we have al-

ready given the reader sufficient knowledge of the pamphlet to convince him of its value. The Physician is answering the cry of heresy, so commonly set up by angry polemics, domineering priests, fanatical preachers and ignorant believers, against Unitarians :

“ When a doctrine is denounced as heretical, this alone is enough to frighten many minds not only from embracing it, but even from examining the subject. In such a case it is well to remember that the cry of heresy is one which has always been in the mouths of the enemies of religious freedom and improvement. Have not the best men, the greatest benefactors of mankind, suffered the reproach of heresy in their day, from the apostles of Christ down to the martyrs of the Reformation? If Unitarianism be indeed heresy, its opponents must admit that it was the earliest on the list, and sprung up in the very footsteps of the apostles. But Unitarians think that the Trinitarian doctrine is indeed the heresy, if such hard names must be used, as being an innovation on that of the apostles, and contrary to the rule of Christian faith. They trace the growth of this doctrine from the first modest insinuation of it by Justin Martyr, through the mystical speculations on the Logos of the early Fathers, to the audacious decisions of the antichristian councils of the fourth and fifth centuries. It was then, when the Church was already deep sunk in corruption of every kind, that by violence and intrigue such as would disgrace in our own days a borough election, this doctrine was at length carried by vote, and imposed on the Christian world on pain of excommunication and other injurious penalties.”—P. 59.

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A Royal Theologian; or, the King of Prussia's Letter to the Duchess of Anhalt, Coethen, on her Change of Religion.

WE have not been able hitherto to insert this curious piece of theology, though we always meant to preserve it in the Christian Reformer. His Majesty of Prussia is very angry with his sister for becoming a Roman Catholic; he terms her new profession a “ sinful ” as well as “ dreadful act.” We have no liking for the Roman Catholic religion; but we should have thought that the avowal of her conversion by the Princess, if sincere, and there seems no reason to doubt it, entitled her to commendation instead of reproach.—The King is fearful of inconvenience to himself from his sister's change of faith—the inconvenience of being suspected, as he has been already, of a popish lean-

ing. In this, there is something selfish.—But the Sovereign of Prussia has studied the controversy; let him then decide for himself, but not for another.—The train of his reading accounts for his being the sort of Protestant that he is: he has evidently studied the Bible with the *Confession of Augsburg* by its side.—Luther's Prayer Book has been reformed under the royal sanction: this is good: but had it been reformed earlier or further, the Princess might have been retained in the Protestant communion; for they are the Protestant unscriptural doctrines derived from the Church of Rome which give this church all her power of proselyting. The worshiper of One God, even the Father, would not be likely to be brought over by any sophistry to kneel before a wooden or breadden God.—The King expresses in the conclusion a right royal notion and feeling with regard to “faithful vassals.”

LETTER.

Berlin,—1826.

I cannot describe to you the very astounding and painful impression that your letter, confirming the previously circulated report (which I regarded as a fable) of you and the Duke having become converts to the Catholic religion, has made and indelibly fixed upon me. For who in this world could ever have anticipated such a thing? Speaking according to the sincere feeling and conviction of my heart, and in compliance with the duty which conscience dictates, I must plainly tell you, that in my judgment a more unfortunate and sinful resolution could not have been adopted than that you have just carried into effect. Had you confided to me when I was in Paris the slightest hint of your intention, I should, in the most earnest and solemn manner, have conjured you, by every thing you hold most sacred, to abandon a design, the execution of which tends to place me personally in a very disagreeable situation. For even I (wherefore I know not) have been suspected of an inclination to Catholicism, though, on the contrary, I have always had, and must ever retain, an unfavourable opinion of that church, on account of the multitude of her anti-scriptural doctrines. It is now, however, highly probable that this notion respecting me will be revived, and that it will be believed that I was aware of the whole affair, and had an understanding with you in it.

But how could you preserve so complete a silence on this transaction, especially when, in your letter, you thus express yourself respecting me:—“That person for whom I have ever been accustomed to experience in my heart the united feeling of filial and fraternal love”? Now can any one believe that a father or a brother would, as a matter of course, approve of his

daughter or sister becoming a Catholic—that is to say, taking the most momentous step a human being can take, without any previous consultation with him? Certainly not! Yet you would appear to have acted on this supposition—and why? Because you had reason to expect on my part a prohibition against the awful and dangerous proceeding on which you were resolved. You have, however, accomplished your purpose,—you have rashly bounded over the immense chasm which separates the two religions—you have renounced the faith of your relations, the faith in which you were born, nursed and educated.—May God be merciful to you!

For my own part, I can only, from the bottom of my heart, lament and deplore the gross error, the delusion into which you have fallen. Assuredly, O most assuredly, you would have been safe from all risk of committing this dreadful act, had you, instead of giving your mind to the polemical writings of either Protestants or Catholics, read with care and attention your Bible, and in particular the New Testament. This is what I have done; for at a period of controversy some years ago I endeavoured to make myself intimately acquainted with the peculiar grounds on which both religions rest, and for this purpose I applied myself assiduously to the Bible, and sought therein the doctrines taught by Christ and his Apostles. This investigation led me to quite the contrary conclusion to that at which you have arrived; for since then I have been more satisfied in my mind, and more than ever penetrated with the truth of the old Evangelical system, as established by the Reformation and Luther, and by contemporaneous, or at least recently posterior symbolic writings, in particular the *Augsburg Confession*, which, next to the Holy Scriptures, form the foundation of the Evangelical Creed. This most strictly corresponds with the religion of Jesus Christ, as delivered to us by the apostles themselves, and by the fathers of the church in the first ages of Christianity, before a Popedom existed. It was far from the intention of Luther to found a new religion. His only object was to purify the old faith from the base alloy and dross which had been introduced into it by Popery, and which had accumulated to such an extent, that more value was placed on this impure mass than on the genuine doctrine, which lay buried and almost annihilated under it. I did not hesitate to examine Catholic Missals and Catholic Catechisms, which I not only perused, but studied. Against these I placed the old Evangelical Liturgies and service books of the first half of the sixteenth century (that is, of the time of the Reformation), compared them with each other, and thus again recognized the perfect accordance of the Evangelic doctrines with the religion of Christ, and, on the contrary, the decided departure therefrom of the Catholic doctrines in many cardinal points. Neverthe-

less, there is much valuable matter in the Catholic Missals; but every thing good in them, Luther, or the authors of the Evangelic Liturgies, who laboured in his name, acknowledged and retained. Since then, however, the men of modern theories have ventured to undervalue all this, and to treat the question as insignificant. But the pure Evangelic doctrine still remains untouched, and may easily be found by those who do not begrudge the labour of seeking for it; as, in fine, has lately been done, the investigation having given birth to a renovation of the ancient Evangelic Prayer Book, of which, in its details, you probably know as little as you do of the old Liturgies of the time of the Reformation, the Augsburg Confession and other writings of the same kind.

This language will, perhaps, appear rude and unkind to you. It is probable, also, that it is not what you expected; for, according to what you state in your letter, you were confident that I could not in my heart blame your conduct, as what you had done was the result of mature consideration. But, be this as it may, I can view the matter no otherwise than I have done. I speak as my heart dictates—good or ill, it must come out. If I be wrong, may God pardon me! May God also be with you and forgive you, if your conviction lead you into error. For what is conviction if it do not correspond with the word of God recorded in the Holy Scripture? Nothing but deception and delusion!

Every where this affair excites extraordinary interest, and is rigidly canvased, although as yet the absolute certainty of the fact is not generally known. Do not therefore allow yourself to be deceived respecting the friendly reception which, as you say, you in some measure experienced on your return at Coethen, and which, as we afterwards learned, was marked by a most unpropitious event.* The honest, worthy people of Anhalt cannot fail to disapprove, as indeed they ought, the step which their Princess has taken: and what is more, it will mortify them severely, though like faithful vassals they may not give to the vexation they feel an expression sufficiently audible to reach your ears.

I cannot close my letter without expressing my sincere regret that I should be placed in the painful situation of saying so many unpleasant things to you. At the same time I must add the request that you will communicate this letter to the Duke, Ingerheim, and Brandenburg, that they may know my sentiments on this subject.

FREDERICK WILLIAM.

* This is an allusion to the breaking down of the iron bridge, by which a great number of the inhabitants lost their lives.



*The Blessings of the Reformation Commemorated,
Improved. A HYMN.*

[From the "Supplement" to "A Selection of Hymns for Unitarian Worship, by Robert Wallace," the Second Edition, just published at Chesterfield.]

How long, tyrannic Rome,
Did Britain bear thy yoke !
How long within the lofty dome
Thy burning incense smoke !
But when the free-born mind
By nobler views was led,
Fast as the chaff before the wind
Thy dark dominion fled.
And soon thy dismal shade
From Britain disappeared,
When Truth in brightest charms arrayed,
Her lofty standard reared.
How happy, had her light'
Reached every slavish mind,
Nor left one lingering cloud of night,
One lasting stain behind !
Christians ! 'tis yours to end
What thus your sires began ;
With all your efforts to extend
The great, the godlike plan.
You feel its peerless worth ;
Then make its blessings known :
Nor cease till all the sons of earth,
One Lord, one Master own.

J. C. W.

Answer to some Popular Objections to Unitarianism.

A little Tract has just been published, entitled "A Humble Attempt at removing Popular Objections to Un-corrupted Christianity."*

The author, after urging the objections to the doctrine of the Trinity, the Atonement, Original Sin, Endless Punishments, and proving that Unitarians do not deny or

* Printed for R. Hall, Library, Taunton. Sold also by Teulon and Fox, London ; William Browne, Bristol ; and John Treadwin, Exeter. Pp. 18. Price 3d.

degrade the Saviour, proceeds, as follows, to shew that they do not exalt reason above revelation :

“ Unitarians strongly object to the contemptuous manner in which human reason is spoken of by their opponents, yet they by no means exalt it above revelation. Both are valued too highly to be placed in opposition to each other. It is rather curious to hear the manner in which reason is treated by those who differ from us. Although constantly in the habit of exercising it themselves, they deny the use of it to others ; have stretched it to the uttermost in attempting to discover the two natures of Christ, yet it is deemed *unpardonable pride in us* to use it while opposing the unscriptural doctrine. By the help of reason, they rear an imposing fabric of mysterious and contradictory opinions, but it must not be employed in exposing the sandy foundation on which their structure is raised. There is not a book that demands a more frequent exercise of reason than the Bible ; and however any sect of Christians may profess to discard it, they cannot actually do so. If we did not avail ourselves of this inestimable gift, what should we think of the declarations of Christ, that ‘ he came not to send peace but a sword,’ that unless we ‘ eat his flesh and drink his blood we have no life in us,’ ‘ we must hate father and mother,’ ‘ pluck out the right eye,’ and a vast number of passages equally bold and unlimited ? How could we reconcile the apparent contradictions of Paul and James, and the clashing of one part of scripture with another, if we did not use our reason with care and caution ? What teaches the Christian to reject the Koran of Mahomet and the Yedah of the Hindoo ? Why does the Protestant object to the doctrine of Transubstantiation and other absurdities of the Romish Church ; the Nonconformist dissent from the Established Church, and the Unitarian refrain from Trinitarian worship ?

“ It is reason, uninfluenced, unbiased reason, that is the mainspring of every action in the conscientious Christian, and bids him refuse to prostrate his understanding at the shrine of error. Let us not reject, then, the guidance of this celestial monitor ; she will not only check our undue curiosity and presumption, but conduct her humble votary to the temple of true religion, and there, by the still waters of silent meditation, in the hallowed retreats of virtue and piety, may he contemplate truth in all her native loveliness.”

Having replied to the objections that Unitarianism is not a religion for the poor, and that it is devoid of consolation in the hour of death, the writer concludes :

"The advocates of Unitarianism only request an impartial comparison of the evidences produced for and against their principles. The Bible informs us on what terms we are to obtain salvation ; let not frail, sinful man then set up a claim to infallibility, attempt to wield the sceptre of heaven, or dare to exercise dominion over the consciences of his brethren ; but rather let him indulge the pleasing anticipation of meeting the good and virtuous of every denomination, where sectarian distinctions will be unknown, and ALL is harmony and love.

"In the present state of the Christian world there will always be a variety of opinions on speculative points of doctrine ; but if a spirit of mild forbearance and affectionate kindness is encouraged, those unhappy feelings will not be cherished, which embitter the enjoyments of social life, rend asunder the bonds of friendship, and cast a dark shade over our sweetest sympathies and brightest hopes. We are all travelling fast to the silent land which is peopled with our fathers, our kindred and our friends. We are hastening to our long last home 'where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.' Away then with that bitterness and contempt with which Christians too often regard those who differ from them. The religion of Jesus should be a bond of friendship for its professors, and not a means of disunion—a refuge for them under sorrow and disappointment, and not an aggravation of their woes—the home of their joys, and not the house of discord and strife. 'Love ye one another.' 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one towards another.'"

E. W. N.

Description of a Village Churchyard.

(From an interesting little work, entitled "The Parish Clerk.")

It was altogether such a spot as a burying-place should be—not a place of gloom nor yet of pomp, for there were no stately monuments. Children were not allowed to play their gambols over the dead, for the good Rector was particularly anxious that they should not thus be permitted to lose the feelings of awe with which the

thought of death should ever be attended, nor were cattle turned to graze in this churchyard : but all sorts of gay and simple flowers were allowed to spring up from the turf, and the sexton would not suffer them to be gathered. There was a noble row of elms on one side of the churchyard, which, when the morning sun shone, scattered their long shadows over the graves ; but there was an opening towards the west, and it was beautiful on a summer's evening to see the lingering light gleaming across the churchyard, and lighting up the village clock with its awful motto—"The time is at hand." The church itself was beautifully neat, and every thing shewed the traveller that he was come among the people who loved *the habitation where the Lord's honour dwelleth.*

Hints to Congregational Musicians.

(From the same work as the last article.)

MR. MOORE had very carefully cultivated the love of sacred music among his parishioners ; while he had constantly discouraged those irreligious practices which are very apt to creep into the performance of this truly delightful part of the worship of God. He wished to make it a solemn sacred act ; not a trial of skill among the people which should sing the loudest, or be the most distinguished among the village band. He admitted no light and airy tunes, and rigorously cut off all spurious additions to the beautiful and majestic simplicity of the old ones. A few vulgar and unpleasant habits he had no objection to lop off, for our good Rector was no enemy, but a friend to some degree of refinement among the poor. He thought a performance like this, though simple, need not be disagreeable. When good habits were once established among the young people who took the lead in this part of the public worship, it was found that the congregation entered with tolerable propriety into the spirit of the service.

Warnings.

[From the "Amulet," before recommended to the reader, p. 391.]

BEAUTY—remember that change and decay
Will pursue in your path, as the night follows day :
PRIDE—bear in mind that your form is of clay,
And will rot with the meanest that stands in your way :

WEALTH—that you are like the rainbow's bright ray,
UNSUBSTANTIAL as clouds, and more fleeting than they :

RANK—let your name be as high as it may,
 That the mandate "be dust," even you must obey :

POWER—what things are your life and your sway,
 Which a breath can destroy and a murmur betray !

HAPPINESS—know that you shine like the light
 Of the wandering gleam that misleads us at night :

PLEASURE—though painted all lovely and bright,
 That your visits are fatal, and rapid your flight :

FRIENDSHIP—though dear to the sense and the sight,
 That thou art but a flower which the wintry winds blight :

LOVE—that thy name, if we read it aright,
 Is *passion*, more fearful because of its might :

HOPE—'tis in you their attractions unite,
 But you lure us to leave us when most you invite.

L. A. H.

On the Duty of Prayer.

THE duty of addressing ourselves by prayer and thanksgiving to the all-powerful Creator and Ruler of the universe, is so strongly and so frequently enforced both by the precepts and example of Jesus Christ and the apostles, as I should apprehend could leave no reasonable doubt on the minds of Christians as to the propriety of the practice.

With respect to the advantages to be derived from a right performance of this duty, they are certainly great and obvious. We are frail and imperfect creatures, surrounded by temptations, and constantly liable to have our affections engrossed by present objects. And certainly nothing can more effectually counteract this tendency, than the frequent habit of addressing ourselves with reverence and devotion to a Being of infinite perfection and holiness : a Being whom we believe to be constantly present with us, taking cognizance of all our actions, and who will at some future period place us in situations where we shall be happy or miserable, according to the habits we have contracted and the dispositions that have been formed in us during our abode in the present life.

The daily habit of addressing ourselves to a Being who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, of supplicating the pardon of our offences, and of praying that we may not be led into temptation, cannot fail to operate as a

powerful inducement to avoid committing those offences and running into those temptations which we are constantly praying against. And by frequently petitioning with seriousness and fervour for the attainment and increase of every Christian virtue, we cannot but be strongly reminded of the obligation to add to our prayers the most diligent and unremitted exertions.

It has been objected by some to the duty of prayer, that it cannot possibly be of any use, because the decrees of the Almighty being fixed and immutable, no prayers of ours can either reverse or alter them. But surely no person will deny that the state of our own minds may be so materially changed by an habitual, sincere and conscientious performance of this duty, as to render it expedient for us to be put in possession of many blessings, which otherwise would have been highly improper, and perhaps prejudicial. If the end is appointed, so are the means. And we may safely venture to appeal to the experience of every person who has made the trial, with respect to the good effects of a serious and regular performance of this duty in promoting right dispositions of mind, both towards our Creator, and towards our fellow-creatures.

Nor indeed in the nature of things can it be otherwise. The Being whom *we* are taught to worship is likewise one whom we can love and honour. Not like the fictitious deities of the Heathens of old, delighting in human sufferings, and feasting on human sacrifices, nor yet like the God of some modern Christians, arrayed in frowns of vengeance, punishing with the utmost rigour even a mistaken opinion, though it should be the result of a sincere, upright and impartial inquiry after truth: never remitting even the slightest offence of his frail and erring creatures without an infinite satisfaction to his offended justice: and dooming by far the greatest part of them to eternal and inconceivable torments, in consequence of a transgression committed many ages before they were in existence.

Far different is the Being whom we are accustomed to worship and adore. By the Scriptures we are taught to consider him as a God of infinite goodness as well as of infinite power; the kind and benignant parent of all his creatures: "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth: keeping mercy for thousands; forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin." We are taught to consider him as that holy and

righteous Being whom it is our highest happiness and perfection to love and to imitate, as well as to reverence and fear ; a Being to whom we can look up with filial affection and confidence for the supply of every real good ; on whom alone we can depend for support and assistance in seasons of difficulty and distress ; and who will most assuredly in the end make all things work together for good, to those who are obedient and resigned to his will. For the privilege of addressing this Almighty Parent by prayer and thanksgiving, we can never be sufficiently grateful. How careful, then, ought we to be not to neglect so important a means of improving and perfecting our nature, and of rendering us more and more resembling the Being whom we adore !

The very general neglect and disuse of family devotion, even among persons who in some respects seem disposed to seriousness, is a circumstance which cannot be too deeply lamented. A serious and regular performance of this duty, must certainly be a powerful means of training up children and servants in a sense of their duty to their Creator, of their dependence upon him, and of the obligations they owe him, and *must* in some degree operate as a check upon the thoughtlessness and profligacy so prevalent among servants, who have had the misfortune to receive little or no religious instruction, and which has long been a subject of severe and universal lamentation. A great degree of responsibility attaches to the heads of families with respect to those persons, whether children or servants, who are under their care. And severe and awful will be the account they must have to render, if having been placed in such situations, they feel not the obligation to embrace every fit opportunity of sowing the seeds of instruction in the ductile minds of youth, of promoting, by every means in their power, their improvement in knowledge and in goodness ; of opening their minds to religious impressions ; and especially of calling them together at stated seasons, to offer up their united devotions to the Creator of the universe, their Father and their God.

It is in vain for *any* person to pretend that he has not *leisure* for the exercise of family devotion. A few minutes with serious and devout attention, would be productive of highly beneficial effects. And I believe we may safely venture to affirm, that there is scarcely a person living, who does not every day spend more time in doing nothing,

than would be requisite to be employed in the exercise of this duty. At the same time he would probably find himself amply recompensed for his time and labour in the improved dispositions and conduct of those about him. By endeavouring to form their young minds to habits of seriousness and piety, he would be laying the foundation for their future good conduct through life. They would become in all respects more valuable members of society, and would be prepared for discharging the duties of all the various relations of life with greater fidelity and zeal. The pure and holy and devotional sentiments which have been infused into *their* bosoms, they would endeavour to disseminate among their companions and friends. The good principles which *they* have imbibed, they would transmit to their posterity, and thus become the honoured instruments, in the hand of Providence, of diffusing great and permanent blessings among mankind; of abolishing the gloomy reign of ignorance, profligacy and vice; and of promoting the knowledge and the practice of the pure religion of Jesus, as far as their influence should extend.

Letters from the Rev. R. Wright, to the Unitarians in the North-east District.

LETTER IX.

Trowbridge, December 1, 1826.

MY CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

I SHALL conclude this series of letters with a few remarks on church discipline. About this subject there has been much controversy, and Christians have gone to great extremes; some adopting such rigid plans as have been subversive of the liberty of the gospel, and others regarding all church discipline as incompatible with liberal principles and proceedings. Of late, controversies on this subject have been less frequent and more moderate; and it may be hoped that we are arrived at a period when the subject may be discussed with Christian temper, and without any interruption of peace and union, and when such discipline as will be useful may be adopted without any infraction of Christian liberty. Still it cannot be denied, that too much of the lordly spirit of former ages, remains among many professors of the gospel; and that church discipline is in many instances made a yoke of bondage, too grievous for those who understand the liberal princi-

ples of pure and primitive Christianity to bear : this, however, is not the case among Unitarians ; it is to be feared that they have, in some instances, gone to the opposite extreme, and neglected the discipline which is necessary : they should, however, remember that the abuse of a thing is no disproof of its use when properly applied. It is not, perhaps, to be expected that an entire uniformity upon this subject should exist among us, nor is this necessary ; if more union is to be effected, it must be in consistency with a diversity of opinion and proceedings, not by the sacrifice of liberty, but by the increase and extension of charity : if every thing practicable to preserve order and promote improvement be done, this is all we ought to desire.

1. It is important to understand and keep steadily in view what is meant by discipline. Discipline does not imply, dominion for no church has a right to exercise dominion over its members. The object of discipline is edification. Edification cannot be promoted by coercion, and all coercion in religion is incompatible with Christian liberty. Christian discipline has nothing in it of authoritative proceedings, for Christ hath not delegated his authority to his followers. As it relates to individuals, it consists in giving them suitable instruction, admonition and reproof ; and, that this may not be neglected, it is desirable that every church should choose and appoint suitable persons to do it. As it relates to the church or assembly, it consists in the preservation of order and regularity, and in the conducting of their affairs with that decorum and propriety which may best promote the ends of Christian society. Opinions, however erroneous they may be deemed, are proper subjects of discipline only so far as the word is used merely to express instruction. Improper conduct alone calls for admonition, and sin for reproof and censure. To attempt to dictate to others how they shall understand and practise the positive commands of Christ, and make our judgment a rule of action to them, is no legitimate part of church discipline ; for it is an assumption of dominion over conscience, which Christ hath prohibited. What consists in imposing on others that which is contrary to their judgment and consciences, is not Christian discipline, but antichristian tyranny.

2. The supposition that Jesus Christ and his apostles established a regular plan of church discipline, extending to all

the proceedings of Christian assemblies, and to be strictly adhered to at all times and in all places, has been very injurious. Different churches, taking for granted that their own plans of discipline are identical with what Christ and the apostles instituted, have become unduly tenacious of them, and converted their own regulations into laws of Christ, to bind the consciences of his disciples. The fact is, no precise, regular and formal system of church discipline can be found in the New Testament; but had such a system been instituted, either by the great Head of the church, or by his divinely-commissioned messengers, it would undoubtedly be found there. Those who think this statement erroneous, have only to point to the part of the New Testament where such a system may be found, and it will be refuted.

3. Our Lord taught the great doctrines and duties of Christianity, revealed the hope of immortality, left the most perfect example, commissioned his apostles to go on with the important work, and left his followers to adopt such plans, form such regulations, and institute such proceedings as should best accord with what he had taught and the perfect example he had left them, and should seem best calculated to promote the great ends of his ministry, death, resurrection and exaltation, according to the times and circumstances in which they live. In no instance can it be lawful for them to do what he hath forbidden, or to omit doing any thing which he hath commanded; in all things, at all times, and in all places, they are bound to keep in view and act upon the principles which he prescribed, to act in his spirit, to aim at the great objects he hath set before them, to imitate as far as possible his example and follow in his steps, and to acquit themselves as his devoted and faithful servants: to pursue a different course would be to forfeit their allegiance to him. What plans or regulations soever they may think it wise and good to adopt, they should be careful to avoid sanctioning with his authority, or insisting on, as laws binding the consciences of others, what are merely plans and regulations of their own: they may be proper and useful; but they must not on that account be enforced by an undue assumption of authority.

4. The apostles gave no regular and circumstantial plan of discipline; they only gave general rules, to preserve the

churches from the pollutions of idolatry and immorality; to promote the recovery and restoration of those who had been disowned for impurity of conduct, or who had fallen into sin, for the comfort and edification of the brethren, and for the general promotion of the gospel. Any particular advice or directions which they gave, related to particular cases as they occurred. In vain may any formal system of discipline, adapted to all the circumstances of the church, at all times and in all places, be sought in the writings of the apostles.

5. Is it then to be concluded that no plans of discipline are necessary in Christian churches? By no means; only that Jesus Christ hath left his followers a sphere for the exercise of their judgment and prudence, in reference to matters respecting which, probably, no circumstantial directions could be given which would be generally applied at all times and in all circumstances; and that consequently every church has a right to adopt that plan of discipline which its members think most agreeable to the spirit of Christianity, and most calculated for edification: only every church should be careful not to lay too much stress upon its own plans, nor prescribe in a tone of authority regulations on which the New Testament is silent, nor ever to make such regulations terms of communion; and no church ought to be offended because other churches do not see the propriety of adopting the same plans as are adopted by its own members; for every church is free and independent, and has an indisputable right to adopt such regulations as those who compose it think wisest and best, and differences in these matters ought to produce no disunion among the churches. Different plans and regulations may be most useful in different places where circumstances are very dissimilar.

6. The best system of discipline is that which best accords with the simplicity and purity of the gospel, which is most consistent with Christian liberty, and is best suited to the circumstances of the church which adopts it. It is highly probable that many regulations in the first Christian churches were adopted from the synagogue; be this as it may, it is evident that they began without any regular plan of discipline. At first the apostles managed every thing; at length prudence suggested the appointment of deacons or stewards, to manage the temporal affairs of the church;

and in most churches such officers will be found highly useful. Whether they be called deacons or stewards, or a committee to act for the congregation, is quite immaterial; it is not the name but the thing, proper persons to manage and direct the affairs of the church, that is of consequence. The appointment of elders was after the plan of the synagogue, and seems to have been adopted on account of its evident utility, and indeed its manifest necessity. Each society had the choice of its own officers and the management of its own affairs; and the churches kept up a friendly connexion and intercourse with each other, for mutual edification, and the promotion of the gospel. Every thing appears before us in the New Testament with great simplicity. Wherever a few persons believed the gospel, they regularly assembled together, and were called a church. Some person or persons were chosen to preside in their assemblies for the preservation of order and the more regular conducting of their proceedings, and were called elders. Those who were qualified were appointed to be teachers and pastors, to watch over their brethren and feed them with the word of life. Those who walked disorderly were admonished and reprov'd, and incorrigible sinners were disowned. Widows, orphans, and the poor, were provided for by the voluntary contributions of their more wealthy brethren. The apostles gave them such advice from time to time, verbally if present, if absent by their letters, as their particular circumstances required. Such were the primitive churches. From this view of things much is to be learned, and many important conclusions may be made. I cannot at present go further into the subject of church discipline, but must submit what I have said in this and the previous letters to your serious and candid consideration, and leave it to the blessing of the Almighty, which I devoutly pray may make it useful among you.

Now, brethren, my ardent wish is, that you may do all things with decency and in order, that your faith and charity may increase and abound, that your churches may be edified, and that you may all dwell together in mutual peace and love. I remain, my dear Christian Brethren, most truly and affectionately, yours, &c.

R. WRIGHT.

God in Man ; or Benefactors Representatives of the Deity

A HYMN.

WHEN first upon this tripping stage
 The naked Infant, stranger stands,
 Who shields him from the tempest's rage?
 His Mother in her fondling hands :

Yes, she with fond affection's arm,
 Makes her kind bosom his abode,
 She clothes, and feeds, and keeps him warm,
 She is to him indeed AS GOD.

The little creature's form expands,
 And new ideas swell the mind ;
 He then relieves a mother's hands,
 And leaves a father's house behind :

A thousand fears her bosom heaves,
 A thousand ills her fears forbode,
 When for a tutor's care he leaves,—
 She is to him indeed AS GOD.

He close inspects his pupil's way,
 Warns him where hidden danger lies,
 Imparts fresh knowledge day by day,
 Then points him upwards to the skies :

Forewarns him of the snares of life,
 And marks out virtue's thorny road,
 Warns him 'gainst anger, discord, strife—
 To him he is indeed AS GOD.

But parents, teachers, both are fled,
 Gone to their last, and dark abode ;
 But Jesus Christ, our living Head,
 Is now become to him AS GOD.

To him all power the Father gives
 To govern all, and to defend,
 While on this earth *one* Christian lives ;
 But after that, shall come the end,—

When *Jesus* shall his crown resign
 Down at Jehovah's awful feet ;
 Where all his ransom'd ones shall shine,
 In his salvation made complete—

Then heaven shall swell with peals of joy
 When all its hosts before him fall,
 Christ and his flock, without alloy,
 And God *himself* be ALL IN ALL.

Him, Father, Teacher, Guardian, Friend,
 Our Saviour and immortal King,
 Through ages that shall *never* end,
 Unceasingly our souls shall sing.

A sea of bliss without a shore
 Or wave to ruffle our repose,
 Him first, Him last, we shall adore,
 Where one bright day shall never close.

Bodicet, Oxon.

PETER USHER.

Charges against Unitarians.

A SHORT and sensible "Discourse" on this subject has just attracted our notice, published by Mr. W. Worsley.* The preacher replies to the accusations against Unitarians, 1, that they are infidels; 2, that they deny Christ; 3 and 4, that they betray a want of respect for the sacred writings, and a disposition to accommodate the language of Holy Writ to their own preconceived opinions. These charges Mr. W. Worsley meets with good sense and an evident consciousness of being able to refute them. His refutation we recommend to the notice of our readers.

On the first accusation, he remarks with great propriety,

"When speaking of those who advocate the Unitarian doctrine, some are so uncharitable as to affirm that *they are no better than Infidels or Deists in disguise*. This is in reality asserting that we are many degrees worse than infidels; for he who openly discards the Christian system, although he may err in his judgment, may nevertheless be guilty of no deception or dishonesty; but the Unitarian, who calls himself a disciple of the great Prophet of Nazareth and professes to revere the word of God, and yet rejects the authority of that great Prophet, and looks upon the heavenly oracles as a fabrication and a cunningly devised fable, is guilty of the very worst species of dishonesty, and of the most dreadful hypocrisy."—Pp. 11, 12.

* "A Discourse on Matthew v. 11, in which some of the Principal Charges brought against the Professors of the Unitarian Doctrine are noticed and refuted. By W. Worsley, A. B." Printed and sold at Gainsburgh (Gainsborough?) by Stark; sold at London by Fox and Co. 12mo. Pp. 24. 1825.

In conclusion, the preacher advises, 1, that the Unitarian should be fully satisfied of the soundness of his religious principles and the sincerity of his professions; 2, that he should be careful that the unkind and illiberal spirit, which he complains of in others, does not gain any influence over him; 3, that as the charges brought against Unitarians frequently originate in a mistaken view of their principles, they should endeavour to give publicity and support to their religious principles; and 4, that whatever imputations be cast upon the professions of Unitarians, they should be careful to afford no room for the impeachment of their moral characters.

Such discourses as this, written in simplicity and with sincerity, are of great service to the cause of truth. The local influence of any one publication of the kind may seem inconsiderable, but the united influence of many similar publications throughout the kingdom, is sooner or later felt, if not in the accession of avowed converts, at least in the diffusion of right views of Unitarians, and in the abatement of religious prejudice; and these are effects which he that seeks for truth and charity, rather than the numerical increase of a party, will hold to be ample rewards for the exertions of the advocates of "pure religion and undefiled, before God, even the Father."

Reformed Jews.

THE condition of the Jews for ages, and throughout almost all countries, has been deplorable. Their state as a portion of society and with reference to civil rights and wrongs has been bad enough; but their moral and religious condition has been far worse. The mass of them have always been the lowest part of every community in which they have mixed. Their name has become a proverb and a by-word. Some few persons of the nation have risen to wealth, and a still smaller number have manifested intellectual superiority; but these instances of civil and mental distinction have only served to put in a more glaring light the humiliation of the bulk of the people.

Whether the Jews have moral notions and maxims of their own, and are in this respect too a "peculiar people," or whether they consider all nations as their oppressors and plunderers, and still think they have a permission from their Lawgiver to "spoil the Egyptians,"—certain it is

that their moral character is different from that of every other communion, and that the difference is not to their honour. If whilst they kept little or no faith with Christians, they were eminent for fair dealing and kindness one with another, our disapprobation would be in some respects lessened; but the experience of our courts of law and justice seems to shew that there is little sympathy between them, and that they are ready to prey upon and to do violence to one another on slight provocation or temptation. We have been slow in taking this view of their character, but it has been forced upon us by events, and nothing would give us more pleasure than to be convinced that we have underrated the actual morality of the Jews.

In religion, strictly so called, this people are yet lower in the scale of intellect and worth. A stupid indifference has encrusted the minds of the greater part of them; and a considerable portion of the remainder are scarcely concealed infidels. The professedly religious Jews are grossly superstitious. These, as far as we can learn, have no settled and distinct faith. They have their days, their fasts, their readings, their prayers; and there religion ends. What inquiry do they make into the true sense of their Scriptures? Fitted above all other persons to understand and elucidate the Old Testament, they do nothing for it as expositors, commentators and critics. Distinguished by their profession of the Divine Unity, whenever are they heard to assert this glorious doctrine publicly, and to protest against what must appear to them the polytheism and idolatry of the communions by which they are surrounded? They have, in most countries, full religious liberty, and their uniform silence upon the "first of all the commandments" must, it is feared, be put down to the account of ignorance, indifference, scepticism or worldly-mindedness. Bound as they are by rigid and unaccommodating religious institutions, instances of apostacy are very common amongst their youth. Few, indeed, profess to be converted to the Trinitarian corruption; but many sink into the world, and their families, without religious knowledge or religious principle, become by virtue of their birth and residence members of the "Church as by Law Established," a church which worships God under names and forms forbidden by Moses and the Prophets, and unknown to Jesus Christ and the Apostles.

Societies for converting the Jews have hitherto failed,
VOL. XII. 2 T

and we can scarcely regret the failure, since if they had succeeded in making the Jews Trinitarians, "the last error would have been worse than the first." Abandoned children, probably half-Jews by descent, have been taken up and provided for by these zealous proselyting associations; and so far it is well. Here and there a trader in opinions comes amongst them from the Jews, and now and then a wretched individual who is seeking for food. We do not find, however, that they entice over respectable and religious persons of the Jewish faith, much less persons whose minds are at all enlightened. There has been a disgusting exposure of roguery amongst the Jew-Society converts. Several of these renegades, after being fed with Christian "bread and wine," have relapsed into their former state, and have been reconciled to their own people by penance and by the mulcts which the credulity of their proselyting patrons has enabled them to pay.

But whilst every other people is in a state of intellectual excitement and moral improvement, can the Jews remain stationary and preserve their hard and unamiable character? We think not. Symptoms have appeared on the Continent of a disposition to a change for the better, in this hitherto inflexible nation. A very few of their writers have attempted to purge their religion from superstition and to reduce it to the rational standard of the law of Moses; and some synagogues have, we learn, diminished the number of ceremonies, and introduced a purer worship, and a worship not wholly in a dead language, which to many even of the Jews is an "unknown tongue."

More recently an attempt at reformation of Judaism has been made, and is we hope still making, in the United States of America; a favourable spot for the noble experiment. In our last Volume, XI. 359, we gave some account of a proclamation by *Mordecai Manual Noah*, "Citizen of the United States, late Consul of the said States for the City and Kingdom of Tunis, High Sheriff of New York, Counsellor at Law," who styles himself a Judge in Israel, and proposes to establish a Jewish Republic, in Grand Island, in the State of New York, on which he is about to lay the foundation of a City of Refuge, to be called Ararat. And an American Correspondent in the *Monthly Repository*, Vol. XIX. p. 554, says, referring to the Jews,— "persons of that denomination are found in some of the most responsible civil situations under our

National and State Governments ; they are also officers in the army and navy, editors of some of our most popular newspapers, and teachers of excellent schools, to which Christians send their children with as little repugnance as to those of their own creed."

The attempt to which we have referred is explained in the *North American Review** for July of the present year, in a notice of the two following publications : " 1. The Constitution of the Reformed Society of Israelites, for promoting true Principles of Judaism according to its Purity and Spirit. Founded in Charleston, South Carolina, January 16, 1825. Charleston, 1825. 8vo. pp. 16.— 2. A Discourse, delivered in Charleston, South Carolina, on November 21, 1825, before the Reformed Society of Israelites, for promoting true Principles of Judaism according to its Purity and Spirit, on their First Anniversary. By Isaac Harby, a Member. Charleston. 1825. 8vo. pp. 40.

The Reforming Israelites at Charleston, to the number of forty-seven, addressed a memorial to the synagogue in that place, praying for certain alterations in the worship. This was rejected by the Vestry without discussion or the right of appeal. Hereupon the petitioners formed themselves into a Society and drew up a Constitution, of which the following are a few of the Articles :

" As soon as this Society finds itself able, it will educate a youth or youths of the Jewish persuasion classically in the English, Latin and Hebrew languages, so as to render him or them fully competent to perform divine service, not only with ability, learning and dignity, but also according to the true spirit of Judaism, for which this institution was formed ; and in the meanwhile, this Society will adopt and support, as soon as practicable, any person so qualified for the sacred office.

" It shall be the primary object of this Institution to devise ways and means, from time to time, of revising and altering

* This is a Quarterly Journal, in the manner of our Quarterly and Edinburgh. It is compiled with great ability, and may be placed beside the above-named celebrated periodicals. Already, it has raised the standard of literature and taste among our Transatlantic brethren. The religious opinions maintained in the Review are such as would be esteemed heresy wherever there is a political and Trinitarian Church ; its politics are, we need not add, republican, but at the same time not intemperate. In this work, England is treated with marked respect, though the national bigotry of some Englishmen who write upon America, is not spared.

such parts of our prevailing system of worship, as are inconsistent with the present enlightened state of society, and not in accordance with the Five Books of Moses and the Prophets.

"There shall be annually elected from among the resident members a committee of five, entitled a Committee of Correspondence, for the purpose of conferring and corresponding, at all times, when it shall be deemed necessary by said Committee, or a majority thereof, with the several congregations, or respectable individuals, or sections of Jews throughout the United States, Europe, or elsewhere, as to any assistance or co-operation which they may be disposed to afford this Society in its future operations.

"Any Hebrew, having attained his seventeenth year, and desirous of becoming a member of this Society, shall make application by letter addressed to the president and members."

The Reviewer says that it has been vaguely suggested, though it is not hinted in these documents, that the new Reformers among the Jews, both in America and Europe, have it in contemplation to remove their Sabbath forward one day, so as to make it coincide with the day of rest of the Christian.

An interesting paper is inserted in the Review from the pen of a Jewish Reformer. This writer estimates the Jews in the Old World, at six millions; in the New, at six thousand only. The congregation at Charleston consists of six hundred persons. The city of New York equals and will soon double it. This informant says,

"Men, who reflect, go any where in pursuit of happiness. The immediate ancestors of the most respectable Jews in these United States came, some for the purposes of commerce, others for the more noble love of liberty, and the majority for both. In Georgia and in South Carolina, several honourably bore arms in the revolutionary war. My maternal grandfather contributed pecuniary aid to South Carolina, and particularly to Charleston, when besieged by the British. My father-in-law was a brave grenadier in the regular American army, and fought and bled for the liberty he lived to enjoy, and to hand down to his children. Numerous instances of patriotism are recorded of such Israelites.

"As to the descent of the Jews of the United States, they are principally German and English; though South Carolina has a portion of French and Portuguese. My ancestors came originally from Barbary, where my father's father enjoyed a post of honour in the palace of the Emperor of Morocco, that of Royal Lapidary. He fled to England, and married an Italian lady. My father left England for Jamaica before he was twenty years of age. He afterwards settled in Charleston, and, I think

I may say, was among the first to set an example to his Jewish brethren, of giving a liberal education to their children."

The Reformed Society have fifty members, making with their families upwards of two hundred Dissenters. The Jews born in Carolina are mostly of their way of thinking. The objects of the Reformers are thus explained :

"The principal points aimed at by the Reformers, are order and decency in worship, harmony and beauty in chanting, the inculcation of morality and charitable sentiments upon individuals, and the promotion of piety towards the Deity. In these things, the Society believes, consist religion, virtue and happiness; in these, the salvation of every rational and immortal being.

"Although in France the rich Jews, generally, have little or no religion, yet in Bourdeaux the Israelites have built a handsome temple, sing with taste and music, preserve great decency and order, and have a portion of the liturgy in French. I have not been able to ascertain whether they sit *covered* or not. But I perfectly recollect being told, by competent authority, that the worship was solemn, affecting and engaging.

"In Germany, where the civil (Christian) authorities interposed to prohibit several exceptionable ceremonies and practices, it was done at the request of enlightened Israelites."

Mr. *Harby*, the author of the second article reviewed, is said by the author to be

— "honourably known in the fields of literature, having published a successful tragedy, entitled *Alberti*, of which the style is more than commonly chaste, and the structure betokens no small dramatic ability. He for some time edited, in an able and indefatigable manner, one of the four daily papers in Charleston; another being conducted also by a gentleman of the same religious denomination, distinguished for the solidity and extent of his views in political economy, and occasionally by the felicity of his literary criticisms. Mr. Harby's Discourse will much increase his reputation. It is conceived in a fine spirit, and executed in a manner altogether worthy of the occasion. There is a solemnity, and a conscientious fixedness and elevation of purpose, apparent in the author's views. He has all the ardour and confidence of a Reformer, to whom obstacles are stimulants rather than discouragements. Though, in the capacity of an Israelite, he betrays a becoming sympathetic indignation for the past sufferings of his brethren, yet he seems to feel, that the name of America is rather a more precious patronymic, than one of antique and foreign origin. Cherishing a bitter hatred against the cruel excesses of spurious Christianity, he still has the candour and discrimination to separate

it from the genuine spirit and precepts of the gospel. His passion for Christian literature, and susceptibility to the beauty of true Christian feeling, have softened his hereditary prejudices, but not affected his hereditary principles. He is a firm 'Jew inwardly,' but is willing to accommodate the 'Jew outwardly' to the conciliatory, compensating and sacrificing spirit of the age."

The following extracts from Mr. Harby's Discourse fully justify the Reviewer's eulogium, high as it is.

"What is it we seek? The establishment of a new sect? No; never. Let other systems of religion split into a thousand schisms; let other modes of faith present to your eyes the motley scene at which philosophy may smile, and true piety must weep; brethren, instructed in a religion of mercy, warring against each other by the arm of flesh, and the weapons of theological pride. Let these examples of human error be seen in other religions; but it is the glory and test of the Jewish faith, that its followers worship **ONE GOD**; that when they raise their hands to veil their eyes, and repeat, 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is **ONE**,' they regard only the God of their fathers, the Lord of all creation, the supreme Jehovah. This be your boast, this be your bond of union.

"What is it, then, we ask of the Hebrew Vestry? The abolition of the ancient language and form of Jewish worship? Far from it. Those who have thoughtlessly opposed our efforts, are well aware, that neither in the petition which first convened this respectable assemblage of Israelites, nor in the constitution which grew out of the rejection of that petition, unheard and uncanvassed, and which constitution stands at once the monument of your firmness and your moderation, was any such abolition contemplated. They well knew, that every prayer, every ceremony, calculated to add dignity to external worship, and warmth to true devotion, was the ardent wish of the members who compose your society. Our desire is to yield every thing to the feelings of the truly pious Israelite; but to take away every thing that might excite the disgust of the well-informed Israelite. To throw away Rabbinical interpolations; to avoid useless repetitions; to read or chant with solemnity; **to recite such portions of the Pentateuch and the Prophets as custom and practice have appointed to be read in the original Hebrew**; but to follow such selections with a translation in *English*, and a lecture or discourse upon the law, explanatory of its meaning, edifying to the young, gratifying to the old, and instructive to every age and every class of society. Is this abolishing our mode of *sacred* worship? Is this sapping the foundations of our venerable faith? No, my friends; this is stripping it of foreign and unseemly ceremonies; divesting it of rubbish, and beautifying that simple Doric column, that primeval

order of architecture, which raises its plain but massy head amid the ruins of time, and the desolation of empires!"

"After the destruction of Jerusalem, our ancestors, though all political union was dissolved, were not unmindful of the promises of God, of the preservation of their name, their nation, and their religion. They still retained some patriarchs in Judea, and what they denominated Princes of the Captivity in the East. Wherever they were tolerated, they established colleges, and instituted various orders of learned men. They have mainly upheld and disseminated the beautiful institutions of Masonry, that universal link of brotherhood. Mindful of the word of God, and convinced of the unity of the Godhead, they have never been seduced from their allegiance to the supreme ONE. The manifold oppressions inflicted on their unprotected heads, have never caused them to apostatize [from] their religion. They exhibit the picture of a people scattered over the whole earth by the winds of heaven, divided from each other by interminable oceans and trackless deserts, yet preserving and venerating the religion, the customs, the antique simplicity, the language, and character of their ancestors, after a lapse of nearly eighteen hundred years!

"Did my limits permit, or my subject require it, my respected auditors, I might carry you with me over those inhospitable climes, those despotic countries trod by the bleeding feet of this selected race, in their pilgrimage through a hostile world. Even during such a recital, I might find subjects for your admiration. I might speak of their academies, and of their eminent men; of their mathematical knowledge; of those sages who have done more for the Jewish name than all the power and conquests of antiquity; of their experiments in chemistry, which science they so materially advanced; not merely analytical chemistry, but, what they pursued with the most ardent passion, synthetical chemistry, in which their combinations were so admirable, that many of the Jewish Doctors fell under the suspicion of being possessed of the *grand arcanum*. This is the secret of the philosopher's stone, by which every metal is to be transmuted into gold. The elixir, by which this precious revolution is to be accomplished, was believed also to have the power of curing every disease (like some celestial julep), and to confer youth and immortality on the man who knew the *synthesis*, and who, cleansed by abstinence and prayer from every *terrene* incumbrance, would patiently watch for '*the flame which wrapped the sacred birth in the bed of purification.*' Such was the extravagance of credulity. A proof at once of the mingled admiration and awe with which the vulgar regard extraordinary learning or striking experiments.

"The Jews and Arabs, in the middle ages, became the physicians of Europe, and the confidants of princes. A Jewish physician has been charged with poisoning Charles the Bald: the

king's death, however, is due to more royal hands. But Voltaire remarks, 'What must have been the ignorance of Christendom at that period, when kings were obliged to send in search of physicians amongst the Jews and Arabs!'^{*} And it may now be added, What might still have been the ignorance of Christendom, if the Jews and Arabs had refused to come!"

"But a remnant has escaped. The celestial fire was not all extinguished. With what pride and pleasure must the happy few who composed our immediate forefathers; the happy few who were sufficiently enlightened to leave oppression, and go in quest of liberty; with what indescribable sensations must these pilgrims of the world have hailed the dawn of freedom, as it illumined the Western horizon! Here they have found a refuge and a home; in this happy land, where nature is profuse in all that can administer to the physical wants and pleasures of her creatures; where, after a few years' residence, they enjoy the rights of men; and where the birthright of ourselves, their children, is equal liberty. Where is he that does not feel a glow of honest exultation, when he hears himself called an American? Who that does not offer praise and thanksgiving to Providence, for the contrast of what man *is* in these United States, and what he *is* under almost every other government? Thus appreciating, thus enjoying the natural and political blessings of our country, we are willing to repose in the belief, that America truly is the land of promise spoken of in our ancient Scriptures; that this is the region to which the children of Israel, if they are wise, will hasten to come. Not to some stony desert, or marshy island, or inhospitable clime, do we invite them. We point out no fixed spot for cultivation or for peace. Let them, and the oppressed of all mankind, take their free choice. They leave behind no paradise, as did our first parents; they rather approach a garden of plenty and variety, where protection is above and around them, and whence the flaming sword of the cherubim has been withdrawn. Let them approach; in coming to America,

The world is all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.

"Let them select the city or the plain, the commerce-beaten shores of the Atlantic or the rich wilderness of nature, that spreads its prodigality throughout the West, presenting incitements to enterprise and stores of wealth, uncounted, unsurveyed, immeasurable."

"But, be the promised land what it may; whether new Jerusalem mean old Judea, renovated and blessed by the munificence of Heaven; or whether, with Chrysostom, we take it to signify the city of God, happiness hereafter; yet are we contented, while we remain on earth in this temporal state, to live

^{*} Voltaire, Hist. Gen. tom. I.

in America; to share the blessings of liberty; to partake of and to add to her political happiness, her power, and her glory; to educate our children liberally; to make them useful, and enlightened, and honest citizens; to look upon our countrymen as brethren of the same happy family, worshiping the same God of the universe, though, perhaps, differing in forms and opinions. We are contented and happy thus to act, and we hope and trust we act rightly and virtuously, until the annunciation of the Messiah shall reunite us into one nation, offering with all mankind, in the name of the universal Father, our common sacrifice on one common altar. Whether that annunciation be made this hour, or thousands of ages hence, let us, in the name of that Being who out of the depths heard the voice of his people and brought them into salvation; that Being who created all men for happiness, and light, and truth; let us, in his name, live in friendship with each other, and in charity with all mankind. In the words of him, whose powers of harmony could exorcise the evil spirit from men's bosoms, 'Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the dew of Hermon, and the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.'

We have been led to occupy so many pages with this subject, because we feel it to be beyond measure interesting. Many are the cheering "signs of the Times," and the religious reformation of the Jewish people is not the least. Will this reformation lead them to the true Messiah? We cannot doubt it. Happy is it for them that Christianity is set before them in the United States in a form which must sooner or later excite their attention, soften their prejudices and enforce conviction. Unitarianism is the only form of Christianity which we can even imagine an intelligent and conscientious Jew to embrace.

Much as the Christian world despises this people, and with too much reason, it is the oldest nation in existence. The boasted antiquity of European noble and royal families sinks into insignificance before the pedigree of the children of Abraham. These singular human beings would naturally constitute the first aristocracy of the world, if their prophetic destination did not point them out as something better, and claim for them the privilege of uniting with every other people in an equal fellowship of truth and virtue.

America is the only soil that has never been polluted by persecution of the unhappy Israelite. The United States first acknowledged him a member of the great family, and

invited him to take his place at the social board, without any badge of inferiority. What if, in reward of this noble act of justice and philanthropy, that country should be honoured by Providence as the final retreat and adopted home of the long-dispersed "chosen people," and they should be fulfilled all the glowing promises made to Abraham and David of the greatness and felicity of their offspring? The land of liberty is the Holy Land; and the true Zion is that spot from which the One Living God is worshiped amidst freedom of conscience, in truth and with purity.

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The Sabbath. A HYMN.

[From "Rural Lays, by MARY ANN PLOMLEY." 12mo. 1836]

WELCOME! thrice welcome, blessed day;
The day of sacred rest!
Be ev'ry sorrow chas'd away,
And ev'ry care suppress'd!
Hail! glorious sun of righteousness,
In heav'nly light array'd!
O lead me in the road to bliss,
And all my footsteps guide!
With joy, thy mandates I'll obey,
To raise my thoughts above;
To sing the tributary lay
Of gratitude and love.
While now with trembling feet I come,
Each sacred rite to pay;
To worship in the hallow'd dome
And humbly bow the knee;
My God! look with compassion down,
While at thy shrine I bow;
O let me think of heav'n alone,
And scorn the things below!

—◆—
Theology and Literature in America.

UNDER the head "American Unitarianism," we gave in a former number, (p. 361), some extracts from the "Christian Register," a weekly newspaper published in Boston, under the direction of the American Unitarian Association. We have already borne our testimony to the value of this

publication. It uniformly exhibits a truly evangelical spirit; it is firm in its declaration of great religious truths, and constant in its persuasions to virtuous practice. Though its first object is to promote the principles of Unitarianism, it takes a lively interest in the labours and success of all religious bodies, and reports their proceedings in a temperate and impartial tone.

We propose to make occasional selections from this and other American publications, which may illustrate the character, the literature, and the religious opinions of our transatlantic friends. The following extract, which we copy from No. 18 of the 5th Volume, would seem to prove that the orthodox clergy of America, who flourished half a century ago, did not think that a departure from a belief in the Trinity was a crime sufficient to depose a man from the situation of a Christian minister. By investigation it would probably be found that many of the last century who are not now suspected of heresy, were decided Unitarians. "Before an Ecclesiastical Council, convened in Wilton, N. H., in 1777, to advise respecting difficulties which had arisen between the Rev. J. Livermore, the pastor, and some individuals of the church. An article of complaint submitted by the aggrieved was, that Mr. L. had said in a sermon that 'the church had held that Christ was the eternal Son of God; but from what authority I know not, for he is not the Son of God in any other sense than in his human nature,' or something to that purpose. Upon this article the Council say as to the complaint, that Mr. L. declared from the desk that 'the Church had held that Christ was the eternal Son of God, &c.,' the Council think it sufficient to say upon this point, that it is to be reckoned amongst those disputables in religion, about which divines of note in the Christian Church have entertained different sentiments, and which does not nearly affect any essential article of faith or practice.—Another article that Mr. L. endeavoured to prove, that faith and repentance and sincere obedience were the conditions of the covenant of grace—on this article the Council do not particularly remark."

American Literature.—Several causes have impeded the growth of native literature in the United States. 1. The number of persons of taste and acquirements living without active employment is very small. 2. The general demand for talent and labour in mercantile and other pursuits,

which promise a more abundant harvest than any literary exertions, however successful. 3. The chief cause, however, is the existence of the more advanced literature of England in the very language of the country. When a good article can be cheaply imported, the native manufacturer is disheartened. America, however, is rapidly acquiring a literature of her own, and the productions of her press already begin to attract attention in Europe. In one department of literature, of a humble, indeed, but very useful description, the United States stand unrivalled. We allude to their newspaper press. There were but six papers published in the United States in 1750; but in 1810, there were 359, which circulated 22,200,000 copies in the year. In 1823, they had increased to the astonishing number of 598. The number of copies circulated in the year by these journals probably exceed 30,000,000. In the British isles, in 1821, with twenty millions of people, the number of newspapers was estimated at 284, and the copies printed annually 23 millions. The whole of continental Europe, containing 160 millions of inhabitants, where the press is chained down by royal and priestly jealousy, certainly does not support half the number of journals which exist in the United States alone. They are superficial observers who attach a small importance to this humble branch of literature. See the Register for May 13th, 1826.

Society for the Conversion of Jews.—From the Register for May 20, we learn that the Americans are beginning to make a fair estimate of that mighty bubble, the Society for the Conversion of the Jews. The fourth anniversary of the Society was held at Boston on the 12th of May. From the report it appeared that the efforts of the Committee had been entirely unsuccessful. A farm had been purchased in Manchester for the commencement of the scheme of colonization, and a few Jews placed thereon; but most of them refused to conform to its regulations, and soon abandoned it. In the course of the year, seven or eight thousand dollars had been expended. The Committee recommended foreign missions in preference to the plan of home conversions. The acceptance of the report, and the approval of the conduct of the officers of the Society, were strongly opposed. Debate ran high. To cool the angry passions that were excited, a prayer was proposed, and it was accordingly offered up by the Rev.

Mr. Reed, of Charleston. The report was finally rejected, and the scheme of foreign missions did not receive the sanction of the meeting. No alteration in the constitution of the Society can take place, except at the annual meeting. In consequence of this, the Society is in a curious situation. The newly-elected Board is decidedly hostile to the *colonizing* project. They have no powers by which they may divert the funds to a foreign mission, and consequently nothing can be done till the next annual meeting in May. Under these circumstances the existence of the Society cannot be long calculated on.

Calcutta Unitarianism.—The inhabitants of Boston seem deeply interested in the promotion of religion in the East. Two meetings were held in the month of May, the latter of them a crowded one, for the sole purpose of considering the best means for promoting Unitarian Christianity in Calcutta. A report was read, the contents of which are highly gratifying. It proposed that the 7,500 dollars, the sum required from the American Unitarians by the Calcutta Committee as a *loan*, should rather be contributed as a *gift*; and, to effect this, that subscriptions should immediately be commenced throughout the country. Much information was asked and given respecting Rammohun Roy and Mr. Adam. We regret to observe, that bigotry has been at work, in the attempt to blacken the characters of these two illustrious men.—“Mr. Lewis Tappan followed, and observing that remarks having been freely circulated in some circles that Rammohun Roy and Mr. Adam are not men of good morals, he would request a gentleman present, belonging to the Orthodox Missionary Society, who had personally known them in Calcutta, to state his impressions. This gentleman in reply spoke respectfully of Rammohun Roy, but doubted the fact of his being a Christian; and with regard to Mr. Adam, he said, that he considered him a moral man, but not a very religious man; nor did he think him possessed of great ability, nor the most proper person to be employed in this work.

“The attention of the meeting was then turned for some time to the character of Mr. Adam. It was said by several that of his abilities we have abundant proof in his writings, from which we are able to form a sufficient judgment for ourselves. Mr. Tappan cited some strong testimonies in his favour. Mr. W. Russell, who had known him in Scotland, gave at some length his history and character; said

that he was regarded as the most promising and eminently qualified missionary in point of talents, character and piety, who had then been sent out. He had known him personally, and could speak of his high worth from his own knowledge."—*Christian Register*, May 20, 1826.

◆

Hymn for the New Year.

LORD, thou hast been our help in the year that is over, Spring and Summer, Autumn and Winter, have praised thee. I will offer unto thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving.

The new-born year speaketh of thee, the days to come promise good from thee; Winter may draw clouds and darkness round us—but Spring cometh—the clouds break their dense folds—the earth openeth her treasury; there is life in the root and beauty in the flower;—and shalt not thou be praised!

O my soul, speak thou the mercies of the Lord! Before thou knewedst good or fearedst evil—before the rolling year had informed thee, or instruction had taught thee to bless him—even then his eye was on thee;—he knew thee, he visited thee. When thy mother nourished thee, he was there—when the morning light visited thy tender eye-lids,—when sight and sound delighted thee, and knowledge dawned upon the mind,—the Lord was in all these things. And when childhood passed away, and youth and hope were before thee, then his hand filled thy cup. Child of many mercies! if thy heart forgot him, he did not forget thee. He sent out his messengers: pain and grief and trouble were there, but love guided them—they touched the strings, and thy soul gave out its music—they broke thine earthly bonds,—thenceforth thy soul drew nearer to Him—they rebuked thy pride, and thy spirit grew pure and humble. Earth is beautiful, but earth fadeth away;—vigour and strength and love and hope are good, but the peace of God is far better, and he that loveth the Creator shall be loved of Him.

Child of Hope and heir of Eternal Promises! another year is before thee, and shall not thine heart praise Him? Trials and temptations await thee, and wilt thou not pray to Him? Death may send forth his summons, and shall not thy spirit be ready for him? O lift up thy heart to Him that liveth for ever, and be thou strong and of good courage,—for blessed is the strength that helpeth thee, and bright the hope that impelleth thee. Child of Immortality! go on thy way rejoicing!

INTELLIGENCE.

London Mechanics' Institution.

The Third Anniversary of this Society was held on the 12th inst., in their Theatre in Southampton Buildings. The Duke of SUSSEX took the chair on the occasion. Dr. BIRKBECK, the President, informed the meeting that His Royal Highness would present the first two annual prizes instituted by Dr. FELLOWES. These are of £10 each; one for the best essay on any of the mechanical powers—the other for the best model of a new or improved machine. There were eight essays in competition for the prize—seven of the candidates had chosen the *lever* for their subject. To one of these, Mr. THOMAS HOLMES, the prize had been adjudged, whose essay evinced considerable mathematical as well as mechanical science. He was a journeyman shoemaker. He had been one of the first Members of the Institution, and a regular attendant at the lectures, twice a week, from the commencement. He was led to the study of mathematics from having, some years ago, accidentally commenced reading the introduction to “Pinkerton’s Geography,” but which he found it impossible to understand without a knowledge of numbers and magnitudes; he then looked out his school-books, and began the study of arithmetic, which he had gone through before, but had not before understood; he followed this with the study of Geometry. He had been enabled to apply these studies in the production of the essay in question.—The prize offered for the best model of an improved or original machine, was adjudged to Mr. GEO. HEN. LYNE, likewise an original Member of the Institution, who had acknowledged himself indebted to it for his knowledge of the principles of mechanical philosophy. The machine, which was put in motion and minutely explained to the meeting by Professor Millington, is for cutting two combs at the same time out of the same piece of tortoise-shell, without waste of material.—His Royal Highness in presenting these prizes addressed both the successful competitors in language of warm congratulation. One sentence of these speeches is worthy of being preserved: “The more information men obtain, and the more industry they exercise, the more they contribute to the happiness of mankind.”—Dr. BIRKBECK announced at the instance of Mr. BROUGHAM, who was unavoidably absent on public duty, that it is the intention of the Committee for the diffusion of useful knowledge (amongst whom, besides the two gentlemen above named, are Lord JOHN RUSSELL, Dr. LUSHINGTON, Messrs ABERCROMBY, JOHN SMITH and W. ALLEN) to begin publishing in July next *elementary treatises on the various branches of science and of the arts connected with them*, at a cheap rate and on a plan suited to the capacity of students.—The Duke of SUSSEX dismissed the meeting with the follow-

ing admirable speech: "It is impossible for me to withdraw from such an interesting meeting without expressing the very great gratification which I have received on this occasion, and the warm interest I feel in the progress of the establishment, as well as my approbation of the principles on which it is founded. To the individual who has addressed you this evening I also feel grateful; but no gratification can exceed mine at the contemplation of the march of present events. As long as this institution continues, it must prosper; it needs no support; but if ever it does, I will do all in my power to promote its interests, and this declaration you may the more rely upon, as I speak it from the bottom of my heart!" This speech was naturally received with the loudest acclamations.

The Convocation.

THIS clerical parliament met as usual November 11th, and proceeded to St. Paul's and heard a Latin Sermon and then dispersed. The Convocation is thus a mere formal meeting; or rather, an exhibition of the impotence of the Church. Our statesmen have wisely determined that the Clergy shall do no business; an order from the King is necessary to their proceedings; were they to attempt to do any thing without this, they would subject themselves to a prosecution. It is curious enough that their over-meddling in matters of heresy, a century ago, was the occasion of their being brought to nothing, as an Ecclesiastical Assembly. They worried "Honest Will Whiston" and Dr. Samuel Clarke for Arianism, and set upon Bishop Hoadly, then Bishop of Bangor (whence the *Bangorian Controversy*), for his Dissenting principles, (Hoadly is commonly called *The Dissenting Bishop*,) and these vexatious proceedings led the Government to put an end to their power. Their meeting, whenever a new parliament meets, is now as harmless as the annual Assembly of the General Baptists in Worship Street.

The Convocation agreed upon an address to His Majesty in quite as high terms as the age will allow: His Majesty's answer was general and discreet.

In reference to the Convocation the *Sunday Times* says, "We think the heads of the English Ecclesiastical Establishment would have shewn much better taste at their recent Convocation, if they had ordered a discourse from the pulpit on Christian Charity, instead of listening to a Latin Oration against Catholic Emancipation."

OBITUARY.

Died at *Chatham*, in *Kent*, October 20, 1826, in the 81st year of her age, Mrs. RACHAEL SEATON, relict of the late Mr. Joseph Seaton, for many years the pastor of the General Baptist Church in that place, who carried on at the same time a large and respectable business, a man universally beloved and

respected. She was born February 7, 1745, at Headcorn, her father, Mr. Edward Love, being one of the principal supporters of the General Baptist interest in that place. Indeed, the family of the Loves are its friends and ornaments in different parts of Kent even to the present day. The subject of this short memoir was married December 15, 1768, at Smarden. She had enjoyed throughout life an uncommon portion of health and strength. To the last she wore well; her faculties remained unimpaired, her corporeal energies undiminished. Her natural cheerfulness never forsook her, and her almost incessant activity ceased only with the termination of her career. Indolence was her abhorrence, whilst industry was a kind of atmosphere in which alone she enjoyed a free and full respiration. To her beloved partner in secular concerns she was a *help-mate* of the first order; and when retired after his decease from the busy scene, her mind was ever employed in studying the welfare of her numerous and affectionate family. Nor did this excellent woman at any time suffer the affairs of this present transitory world to absorb the infinitely more important concerns of the world to come. She made an early profession of that divine religion which proved the guide of her life, the solace of her advanced years, and the firm ground of her hope in the anticipation of heaven! It is supposed that previous to her marriage she was baptized at Headcorn by immersion. Nor with her was it deemed an idle rite or an unmeaning ceremony. Her subsequent conduct verified the apostolic definition, its being *the answer of a good conscience towards God*. And while she thus adorned the profession she had made of her belief in the Unity of God and in the divine mission of his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, she lamented the frozen indifference which in times past has too much characterized the General Baptists. Her last message to the writer of this article a few weeks previous to her decease, was a hearty congratulation on the zeal manifested by the friends in the Metropolis, in preaching and publishing the *Four Lectures on Baptism*. Having lived *the life*, she died *the death of the righteous*. Her removal was not preceded by the lingering agonies of disease, nor was she worn down by the debilities of age. Her dissolution was sudden and unexpected.

In vain my feeble fancy paints

The moment after death,

The glory that surrounds the saints

When yielding up their breath.

One gentle sigh their fetters breaks,

We scarce can say "They are gone!"

Before the willing spirit takes

Her mansions near the throne.

Faith strives, but all its efforts fall

To trace her in her flight,

No eye can pierce within the veil

Which hides that world of light.

Thus much (and this is all) we know—
 They are completely blest,
 Have done with sin and care and woe,
 And with their SAVIOUR rest.

Her remains were followed to her last home by a train of relatives and friends. She has left five sons and five daughters, who knew her worth and revere her memory. She was interred at her own request in the General Baptist Burial-ground at Chatham, in the same grave with her *beloved husband*, for upwards of forty three years the companion of her best days, and for whose memory she expressed and cherished during her widowhood the most unfeigned regard. The Lord's-day evening after her interment, the Rev. Mr. Thomas delivered to a numerous and attentive auditory an appropriate discourse on Isaiah lxiv. 6, *We all do fade as a leaf*, the close of the address manifesting evident and honourable feelings of esteem for the deceased. The tomb has never received into its cold embraces the remains of a more upright and consistent Christian, a more uniformly valuable member of society. Such is the pure and genuine influence of the religion of the New Testament. And these are not the too adulatory strains that are lavished on the dead. They are the dictates of truth and soberness. The writer of this Obituary well knew and highly esteemed the deceased; in her he always thought the exquisitely drawn portrait of Solomon (Prov. xxxi. 10, &c.) felicitously exemplified: "Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.—She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but *thou* excellest them all: Favour is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates."

Islington, November 20, 1826.

J. EVANS.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Various communications have been received, of some of which use will be made in the next Volume.

The Subscribers to *The Christian Reformer* will see that we have lately, and particularly in the present Number, exceeded our usual quantity of letter-press: should the sale continue to warrant the enlarged quantity, it will be cheerfully given.

We hope to make the next Volume still more worthy of public patronage.

Although several Numbers of *THE CHRISTIAN REFORMER* have been reprinted, many are very scarce, and some are nearly out of print: Subscribers are therefore advised to make early application for Numbers and Volumes to complete their sets.

AN INDEX

OF

SUBJECTS AND SIGNATURES.

A.

<i>A.</i> 's report of the Dover and Canterbury Sunday-school Union,	322
<i>A. B.</i> on American Unitarian publications, 21. A poem on Youth, by,	196
Adam, Rev. W., new mode of attack and defence adopted against, in the East Indies,	105
Adams, Ex-President, death of 294, 357. A letter of his on intemperance,	294
<i>A. H.</i> 's outline of a plan for the religious improvement of the poor,	190
America, celebration of the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in, 1. Churches of, 235. New Unitarian church at Salem in, 354. Theology and literature in,	490
American Unitarian Association,	82
American Unitarian publications,	21
American Unitarianism,	361
American Wesleyan attacks upon Unitarianism,	311

Amulet, the, or Literary and Christian Remembrancer, recommendation of, 391. Extracts from, 391, 409,	430, 469
Anderson, Jotham, extract from his "Recollections,"	346
Anecdote of the late John Wesley,	149
Anhalt, Duchess of, letter to, on her change of religion,	463
April-day, an,	128
ARMSTRONG, Mr., his letter to Mr. Gurney, the Quaker,	212
<i>A. Y.</i> on private and family prayer,	416

B.

<i>B.</i> on Mr. Wright's letter preparatory to his visiting Scotland, 216. On American Unitarianism,	361
Barton, Bernard, verses by,	295
Belsham's, Mr., Dissertation on Paul's Epistles,	73
BEREAN, A, on the Unitarianism of 1 Cor. xv. 27,	281
28,	

- Besley's Exeter News, an instance of clerical intolerance, from, 36
- Bhye, Alla, character of, 414
- Bible, Natural History of the, 218, 258
- Bidlake, Mr. William, obituary of, 454
- Bigotry of New Baptist Magazine, 303
- Birds, catalogue of forbidden, 219
- Birmingham Journal, character of and extract from, 89
- B. M.*, facts by, relating to the Unitarian controversy, 340. His serious questions to all lovers of Christian Truth, 341
- Bolton Chronicle, report of the Moor-Lane chapel anniversary, from the, 165
- Bolton District Association, 452
- Bowring, John, Esq., hymn by, 416
- Bransby, Rev. James Hews, conclusion of a sermon by, 231
- Brent, Mr. John, obituary of, 454
- British and Foreign Unitarian Association, address of the, 54. Notices of, 165, 323. Remarks on, 191. Plan for making known its proceedings, 349
- Brothers, Richard, the false prophet, 380, 439
- Brougham, Mr., speech of, on the state of Ireland, 452
- Burdett, Miss Eleanora, lines to the memory of, 280
- Burn, Rev. Mr., his speech at the Birmingham Low Bait's dinner. 89

C.

- Calcutta, commencement of Unitarian Christianity in, 70
- Calvinism, God's perfections opposed to, 67
- Calvinistic Hell, 128

- CARPENTER, Rev. Mr., his recommendation of the Radford Unitarian congregation, 91
- Cartwright, Major, piety of, 351. Instance of his integrity, *ib.* Prayer of, 352. On subscription to creeds, 353. Maxim of, *ib.* His dying message, *ib.* Religious opinions of, 354
- Catholic Emancipation, resolution and speeches on, 237
- Cedars of Lebanon, descriptions of the, 220, 256
- Cerinthus and St. John, remarks on the story concerning, 133, 174
- CLARKE, Mr. H., his address to Trinitarians, 271
- Clerical intolerance, 36
- Children, a plain Catechism for, 7
- Christianity, superiority of, over Deism, 161. Beneficial influence of, on its first promulgation, 293
- Christian Reformer, address to its subscribers and correspondents, 404
- Christian Register newspaper, U. S., extracts from, 41, 361, 491
- Christian superstition rebuked by Indians, 305
- Christians, American sect of, 361
- Christmas Day, on the religious observance of, 449
- Church discipline, on, 473
- Church government, queries on, 161. Remarks on, 195
- Church of England, compared with churches of America, 236. Remarks on the, 424
- Cockburn, Mr., speech of, on Negro-slavery, 118
- Congregational collections among Unitarians, 153
- Congregational Magazine, account of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, from the, 402

Congregational musicians,
hints to, 469
CONSTANT READER, A, lines
on a tomb-stone in Brock-
dish churchyard, furnished
by, 215
 Convocation, the, 496
COOKE, Mr. G. W., his let-
ter to the Secretary of the
Unitarian Association on
Sunday-school books, 306
CORRESPONDENCE, 84, 132,
168, 239, 403, 456, 497
Cowley, Mr. William, obitu-
ary of, 239
Croley, Rev. George, a sa-
cred poem by, 391
Cundill, Rev. John, obituary
of, 455

D.

D., tables of Toleration, by, 245
David, essay on the history
and character of, 241
Dawson, Mr., speech of, on
the state of Ireland, 453
Death-bed of a mother, 346
Deism and Christianity, 161
DELARUE, Mr. D., on lay-
preaching, 338
Denham and Clapperton's
Travels, extract from, 330
Devonport, Unitarian lec-
tures at, 110
Disobedience, the curse of, 295
**Dover and Canterbury Sun-
day-school Union anni-
versary**, 322

E.

Eagle, natural history of the, 222
Edgeworth, Miss, on French
Oaths, 409
Edinburgh Review, on the
Church of England, 424
EDITOR, on a cheap Peri-
odical for Sunday-schools,
307. On "The Recollec-

tions of Jotham Ander-
son," 346. His inqui-
ry respecting Unitarian
churches in Salem, U. S.,
354. On Mr. Gilman's
Sermon on John i. 1, 14,
364. On Mr. Mardon's
Sermon on the Apostle
Paul an Unitarian, 375.
On Bishop Heber's death,
&c., 376. His reference
to Dr. Watts's Solemn Ad-
dress to the Deity, 420
Ellerby, Elizabeth, obituary
of, 84
 England, religious intole-
rance in, 246. Journal of
a missionary tour in the
west of, 282
 Epitaph in Wanstead church-
yard, 391
E. S.'s reflections on the
goodness of God, 289
Estlin, Mr., on objections to
Mechanics' Institutes, 51
 Evangelical preaching, 393
EVANS, Dr., his obituary of
Mrs. Seaton, 496
Evershed, Mrs. Elizabeth,
obituary of, 323
E. W. N. on a tract in reply
to some objections to Uni-
tarianism, 466

F.

Family worship, on, 229,
416, 472
Flagellants, fanatical sect
of, 334
Forget Me Not, extract from
the, 416
Fountain of Marah, a hymn 430
Fraser's Journey into Kho-
rasan, extract from, 215
French Oaths, on, 409
**FRIEND TO THE PROMOTION
OF EARLY PIETY**, A, on
the instruction of young
women by ladies, 79

G.

- G. on Evangelical preaching, 393
- G. B. W. on religious instruction to classes of young persons, 247
- GIBBS, Mr. SILVANUS, letter to and from, 110. A discourse by, on the person of Jesus Christ, 142, 179. Tribute of gratitude to, from the congregation at Devonport, 298
- Gilman's Mr., sermon, at Charleston, on John i. 1, 14, 364, 419
- G. M. D., an extract from Bishop Taylor's Life, furnished by, 186
- GOD, on the unchangeable love of, 67. Attributes of, 198. Reflections on his goodness, 289. Is love, 416. Benefactors representatives of, a hymn, 478
- GREEN, Mr. JOHN, his statement respecting the Kent and Sussex Unitarian Missionary Association, 33
- GUILLAUME on the penitent malefactor's address to our Lord, 332
- Gurney, Mr., letter to, on a Trinitarian discourse of his at Taunton, 212

H.

- Harby, Mr., a Jewish Reformer, extracts from a Discourse by, 486
- Harrington, Rev. M., testimonial to his worth and ability as a Unitarian Missionary, 36. His journal of a missionary tour in the west of England, 282
- Harrish's Natural History of the Bible, character of and extracts from, 218, 258

- Hawker, Rev. Dr., extract from, 142
- Heber, Dr., on religious toleration, 186. Sacred poems by, 376
- Hebrew Tales, 64
- Hell, a description of, 128
- Hemans, Mrs., poems &c., by, 159, 251, 430
- Henry, Mr. Matthew, his Plain Catechism for Children, abridged, 7
- Heresy, on the cry of, 462
- H. H.'s statement of religious intolerance towards a child, 82
- History honest with regard to deceased princes, 173
- HOLMES, Mr. J., his history of the Radford Unitarian congregation, 91
- Hulme, commencement of Unitarian worship at, 451
- Human depravity, on the popular notion of, 394
- Humboldt's Travels in South America, extract from, 305
- H. W.'s hymn on the blessings of the Reformation, 466
- HYMNS, 139, 320, 416, 423, 430, 466, 498, 490, 494
- HYNDMAN, Mr. JOHN S., on a Mahomedan oration, 198

I.

- I. C. on the Epistle to the Romans 154
- IGNOTUS on self-examination, 96
- Indian rebuke of Christian superstition, 305
- Infant, lines to the memory of an, 230
- Infant Piety, a hymn, 380
- INTELLIGENCE, 33, 80, 129, 165, 202, 282, 322, 354, 399, 451, 495
- Intemperance, a letter on, 295
- Intolerance, instances of, 36, 82
- Intolerant nations, 245

Ireland, parliamentary debate on the state of, 452
Israel, the Restoration of, 391

J.

J. C. on the unchangeable love of God, 67. On some lines to the memory of an infant, 230
Jefferson, Ex-President, his death and funeral, 357
Jesus Christ, on the nature and person of, 15, 74, 123, 142, 179, 209, 213. His example in favour of the observance of the Sabbath, 47. Penitent malefactor's address to, 332. On the notion of two natures in, 459. His death a direct argument against his essential deity, 459
Jews, moral and intellectual character of the, 480. Account of a Reformed Society of, at Charleston, in America, 483. American Society for the Conversion of, 492
J. M.'s obituary of Elizabeth Ellerby, 84. On the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, 191. His exposure of the bigotry of the New Baptist Magazine, 303
J. N.'s address to a Red-breast which flew into his room in the month of October, 5
John, St., the Evangelist, and Cerinthus, the Heretic, remarks on the story concerning, 133, 174
John VI., King of Portugal, character of, 173
John i. 1, 14, sermon on, 364, 419
1 John v. 7, remarks on, 29
Judea, an evening in, a hymn, 423

K.

Kent and Sussex Unitarian Missionary Association, 35
KETLEY, Mr. J., his report of the Welburn Sunday-school anniversary, 202
Knox's Harp of Zion, extracts from, 423, 438

L.

Labouring classes, conclusion of a sermon in aid of a subscription for relieving the distress of, 231
LAMPEN, Mr., his obituary of Mr. William Cowley, 239
Lancashire and Cheshire provincial meeting, 287
Langlands, Baron of Wilton, 149
Latter-day glory anticipated, 345
Laymen, list of eminent Unitarian, 457
Lay-preaching, on, 296, 336, 338
Lingard's description of the effects of the Plague, 334
Liverpool anti-slavery meeting, letter to the promoters of the, 307
Locke's Essay on Paul's Epistles, recommended, 73. Character of his "Reasonableness of Christianity," 351
London Mechanics' Institution, report of the, 495
Lovers of Christian Truth, serious questions to all, 343

M.

Mahomedan oration, 198
Mahometan zeal and orthodoxy, 330
Malcolm's, Sir John, portrait of Alla Bhye, 414
Manchester, anniversary of the third Unitarian chapel at, 80

- Marden, Mr. James, his speech at the Midland Catholic Association anniversary, 238
- Mardon, Rev. B., recommendation of and extract from a Sermon by, 375
- Marriage, on the English laws relating to, 425
- M'Donnell, Rev. Mr., speech of, at the Birmingham Low Bailiff's dinner, 90 —at the Midland Catholic Association anniversary, 237
- Mechanics' Institutes, on objections to, 51
- Meditation, a, after reading Mr. Butcher's Discourses on Christ's Sermon on the Mount, 13
- Mercy in judgment, 66
- Messenger Bird, the, 310
- Messiah weeping over Jerusalem, 343
- Middleton's, Dr., remarks on the story concerning St. John, the Evangelist, and Cerinthus, the Heretic, 133, 174
- Midland Catholic Association, 237
- Milton's Treatise of Christian Doctrine, remarks on and extracts from, 29, 74, 123, 205
- Missionary Register, extract from the, 257
- M'Neile, Rev. Hugh, remarks on two sermons of his, 393
- Monthly Repository, Prospectus of the New Series of the, 405
- MOORE, Mr., on the divine origin and authority of the Sabbath, 22, 42, 98
- Moor-Lane chapel, Bolton, anniversary of, 165
- Moses, an essay on the character of, 37
- Mystery, New-Testament meaning of a, 444
- N.
- N.'s essay on the character of Moses, 37—on the history and character of David, 241
- Negro-slavery, 83, 112, 307
- New Baptist Magazine, bigotry of, 303
- New Monthly Magazine, verses from the, on the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in America, 4
- Newspapers, number of, in England and America, 492
- New Year, hymn for the, 494
- New York, U. S., account of laying the foundation of the Second Unitarian Church at, 129
- New-York Christian Inquirer, remarks on Deism and Christianity, from the, 161
- North American Review, character of the, 483
- North-Eastern Unitarian Association anniversary, 286
- NOTICES, 161, 204, 323
- Nottingham Fellowship Fund anniversary, 401
- Nottingham, second Unitarian chapel at, 80
- Nugent, Lord, speech of, on Negro-slavery, 112
- O.
- OBITUARY.—Mr. Bidlake, 454. Mr. John Brent, *ib.* Mr. William Cowley 239. Rev. J. Cundill, 455. Eliz. Ellerby, 84. Mrs. Evershed, 323. Mrs. Seaton, 497. Mr. John Taylor, 288. Rev. John Yates, 455
- Ordination services, on, 387
- Orthodox neglect of the gospel, 281
- Orthodox tactics, 104
- Orthodoxy, various systems of, 422
- Oriental Herald, account of the Pilgrim Fathers, from, 1

P.

Paine and Voltaire,	161
Palm-tree, description of the,	258
"Parish Clerk," extracts from the,	468
Parliament, opening of the new,	452
Paul, the apostle, an Unitarian,	375
PAYNE, Mr. T., a plain extempore discourse by, 15.	
On lay-preaching, 336.	
Verses by, on the latter-day glory,	345
Phil. ii. 5—11, substance of a discourse on,	15
Philosopher and a Rabbi, conversation between a,	65
Physician, brief statement of the Unitarian Doctrine, by a,	458
Pilgrim Fathers, historical account of the, 1. Their landing commemorated,	4
Pious Frauds,	386
Plague of 1350,	333
Plomley, Miss, a hymn by,	490
Poor, plan for religious improvement of the,	190, 247
Portugal, religious toleration in,	360
Potter, Richard, Esq., speech of, at the Manchester Unitarian chapel anniversary,	80
Poverty, no venial crime to insult,	66
Prayer, on family and private, 229, 416. On the duty of,	470
Priestley, Dr., singular tribute to the memory of, 88. Eulogium on,	302
Princes, history honest with regard to deceased,	173
Providence, proper effect of a belief in,	351
Prussia, King of, his letter to the Duchess of Anhalt, on her change of religion,	462
Public worship, duty of attending,	384

Q.

Quaker Epistle extraordinary,	431
-------------------------------	-----

R.

Rachael's lament on the birth of Benjamin,	438
Radford Unitarian congregation, history of the, 91.	
Opening of the chapel at,	204
Reason, on the use of, in religion,	467
Redbreast, address to a,	5
Red Sea, passage of the, a poem,	376
Reformation, the blessings of the, commemorated and improved, a hymn,	466
Religious intolerance towards a child,	82
Richmond Inquirer, account of Jefferson's funeral, from the,	357
Rizpah: a poetical paraphrase,	62
R. L. C., two papers on the Pilgrim Fathers, furnished by,	1
Rogers, Henry, a poem by,	343
Roman Catholic tract, remarks on a,	199
Romans, on the Epistle to the,	154
Roscoe, Mr., lines by, 185.	
His letter to the promoters of the Liverpool anti-slavery meeting,	307
Rose and Snail, a fable,	41
Royal theologian, a,	462
RUNDELL, Mr. N., on the Unitarian lectures at Devonport,	110
RUTT, Mr., on Milton's Treatise of Christian Doctrine,	29, 74, 123, 205
R. W. W.'s collection of perverted scripture, 344. His Unitarian confession, 413.	
On scriptural prayers and sermons,	413

S.

- Sabbath, on the divine origin and authority of the, 22, 42, 89. A hymn on the, 490
- Sandwich Islands, singular superstition in the, 275
- Scriptural prayers and sermons, 413
- Scripture and Scripture perverted, 344
- Seaton, Mrs. Rachael, obituary of, 497
- Seducer, a tale for the, 373
- SELBY, Rev. W., on the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, 349
- SELECT LIST OF NEW BOOKS, 456
- Self-examination, on, 96
- Shepherd, Rev. W., speech of, at the Moor-Lane chapel anniversary, 166
- Somerset, Gloucester and Wilts Unitarian Missionary Association report, 33, 399
- Spain, religious bigotry of, 360
- Spring, the voice of, a poem, 159
- STANGER, Mr. W., his report of the North-Eastern Unitarian Association anniversary, 216
- St. James's Chronicle, verses from, 211
- Stork, natural history of the, 263
- Story for the enemies of Free Trade and of the improvement of Mechanics, 215
- Subscription to creeds, on, 353
- Sunday-school books, a letter on, 306. Plan for the supply of, 322
- Superstition, instances of, 275, 333
- Sussex, Duke of, his speech at the London Mechanics' Institution anniversary, 496
- Swanwick's, Mr., address on behalf of the congregation, at the ordination of the Rev. R. Brook Aspland, M. A., at Chester, 387

T.

- TAYLER, Rev. James, his recommendation of the Radford Unitarian congregation, 91
- Taylor, Jeremy, D. D., extract from the Life of, 186
- Taylor, Mr. John, obituary of, 288
- T. C. A.'s anecdote of the late John Wesley, 149. On congregational collections among Unitarians, 15
- Teachers of the Unitarian Baptist Sunday-Schools, in Dover and Canterbury, letter of, on Sunday-school books, 306
- Times newspaper, its criticism on the character of the late King of Portugal, 173. A tale of woe, from, 373. Account of Richard Brothers, from, 380, 430
- Tolerant nations, 246
- Toleration, religious, on, 186. Tables of, 245
- Tomb-stone, lines on a, 215
- Treasures of the Deep, a poem, 251
- Trinitarians, opinions of, 15. Address to, on their affected pity for Unitarians, 271
- Truth-Teller, extract from the, 237
- TURNER, Rev. W., on some Sunday-school books, 7. Excellence of his Abstract of the Bible History, 248

U.

- Unbelievers in Unitarian congregations, on, 252, 316, 325
- UNITARIAN, A., on church government, 195
- Unitarian, the confession of an, 413
- Unitarian controversy, false relating to the,

- UNITARIAN MINISTER, AN,
on the religious observance of Christmas Day, 449
- Unitarian Repository and Christian Miscellany, extracts from, 70, 105
- Unitarianism, commencement of, in Calcutta, 70. Refutation of American Wesleyan attacks upon, 311. Evidence found in the Apostle Paul's writings and discourses, in favour of, 375. List of eminent laymen who have advocated, 458. Important view of the evidence for, 460. Reply to an argument against, 461. Answer to popular objections to, 466
- Unitarians, faith of, contrasted with that of Trinitarians, 15. Letters to, in the north-east district, 85, 169, 226, 252, 316, 325, 381, 434, 473. Congregational collections among, 153. Character of, in New Baptist Magazine, 304. Charges against, 479
- United States' Literary Gazette, a poetical paraphrase from the, 62. Verses from, 128. A hymn from, 139
- Upham, Rev. Mr., his address at the laying of a corner-stone of a new meeting-house in Salem, U. S., 355
- USHER, Mr. PETER, a hymn by, 478
- V.
- VECTIS's remarks on a Catholic publication, 199
- Vice and misery: a tale of woe, 373
- Village Churchyard, description of a, 461
- Voltaire and Paine, 161
- W.
- Ware, Rev. Mr., his address on laying the foundation of the 2nd Unitarian church at New York, U. S., 129
- Warnings, 469
- W. C.'s obituary of Mrs. Elizabeth Evershed, 323
- Wellburn Sunday-school, anniversary of, 202
- Wellbeloved's, Mr., Sermon on the Mystery of Godliness, 444
- Wesley, John, anecdote of, 149
- Wesleyan Methodist Conference, 402
- Whale, account of the, 268
- Whitby, Dr., opinions of, 208
- Wife, value of a good, 64
- Wilson's History of Hawick, extract from, 149
- Worsley, Mr. W., remarks on a Discourse by, 479
- WORSLEY, Rev. J., on lay-preaching, 296
- WRIGHT, Rev. R., letters of, to the Unitarians in the north-east district, 85, 169, 226, 252, 316, 325, 381, 434, 473. His letter preparatory to his first missionary visit to Scotland, 216
- Y.
- Yates, Rev. John, obituary of, 455
- Young women, instruction of, by ladies, 79, 190, 247
- Youth, a poem, by a young lady, deceased, 196



